

my life



Part 6

Ivan George Elder

P r i v a t e l y P u b l i s h e d

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Acknowledgements

The original objective behind the start of this life story was to give a picture of my life here in New Zealand to my Grandchildren who were born and lived in United States of America. Since my early years go back almost to pioneer days in New Zealand history and indeed early years in the growing modern world I felt it was worth painting a picture of what life was like then for their benefit. The project grew and the availability of a diary kept during most of my war years and of other overseas trips gave me a unique opportunity to relive those days and record them for my family and descendants. It has been a very nostalgic and intriguing journey to take and I have found it very interesting myself.

This venture was started after Millie's death but much was written after my unanticipated marriage to Elizabeth. I was grateful to her for allowing me to take over her sunporch/sewing-room for my computer and basic records. There was just enough room for my morning coffee cup on days when the sun called.

I am also very much indebted to my daughter Dawn for intensive editing work on the earlier chapters. In the later stages I acknowledge the painstaking work Ron has done in further editing and preparation towards publishing the work. In this process all of the other members of my family - David, Susan and Dawn - have been helpful in checking facts and layout.

Elizabeth - A Short History

Elizabeth Young and I were left as neighbours when her husband Jim died in October 1998. Jim had been a farmer at Kaiwera and was a client of mine for many years from when he took over his father's farm about 1950 until the sale of my practice in 1983. We had formed a really good friendship and I was looking forward to having him to chat with over the fence from time to time. They had bought the property while I was overseas about seven months before they moved in. They had a double garage built and converted the former garage/coalshed into a storeroom and sunny porch to the north. I came home in late September 1998 to find them in residence.

The wedding of their youngest daughter Melissa took place at the farm on Sunday the 4th of October. Four days later Jim took the photos of the wedding up to to show to his brother Harvey in Broughton St. Jim had not returned home for tea so Elizabeth phoned Harvey to see if he would like to be picked up. Harvey told her he had left to walk home about half an hour earlier and should have been home by now. Elizabeth knew instinctively that something was wrong. She phoned the hospital and was informed that they had admitted an unidentified man who had suffered a heart attack. Her Uncle Wally and Aunt Rose were with her staying on after the wedding and she simply said to them, 'Come.' They found at the hospital that it was Jim. He could not be saved. She learnt afterwards that he had felt unwell on the street and a passing St John paramedic had noticed him and called an ambulance. His death would not have been entirely unexpected as he had an enlarged heart as a result of events in his teenage years. I well recall attending his funeral and hearing the tributes to his life, some of them given by his daughters.

Elizabeth was an English girl who had come to New Zealand with a college friend for a working holiday. She had chosen New Zealand as her Uncle George had emigrated back in 1948 and on a visit back to England he had invited her to visit them. She planned to do

this with a friend but that girl got engaged and a visit to New Zealand was off for her. She asked another friend called Betty if she would like to accompany her. Betty replied, 'Yes, but where is New Zealand?' Her Uncle George lived in the North Island but the girls ventured south in order to see as much of the country as possible. While down south Betty got a position as a housekeeper/nanny with a family at Balfour which she found very congenial. Elizabeth could only find a housemaid's job at Mossburn Hotel some thirty miles away. On one of her days off she cycled all the way to Balfour to see Betty. She called at the Balfour Hotel to ask directions to Dillon's place. Upon hearing that she had already biked from Mossburn they offered to take her out to the farm. I think she was driven back to Mossburn after the visit.

Betty's employer, Mrs Dillon, mentioned Elizabeth's plight to her hairdresser in Gore. The hairdresser happened to be Rhoda Young. Rhoda was living at home while conducting her hairdressing business in Gore and was concerned that the housekeeping at the farm was becoming rather heavy for her elderly mother. Mr Young Snr had died and his wife had stayed on to keep house for Jim. At first Mrs. Young dismissed the idea as unnecessary but Rhoda still went ahead and arranged an interview. Elizabeth was offered the job. When the time came for the girls to head back to England Jim suggested that they stay on for a while and eventually this ended in his engagement to Elizabeth. Betty and Elizabeth then travelled back to England via Canada and crossed the Atlantic on the Queen Elizabeth. In 1966 Jim travelled to England and they were married in June of that year.

Elizabeth was the older daughter of John and Winifred Denford, then living in Winchester, Hants. John was employed for 44 years in the finance department of London Transport and until near retirement lived near Twickenham southwest of London. He and Winifred Turner had met in Cornwall shortly before the war while on holiday. They were to have two daughters, Elizabeth born in 1939 and Joyce about six years younger. John was a keen fisherman - he also loved sailing and owned a yacht in which he and Win spent many happy hours. John died in 2005 in his early nineties and Winifred survived him well into her hundreds. She remained very active and alert and able to live in her own home.

Elizabeth came back to New Zealand as Jim's wife to live at his 'Creekside' farm. Mrs Young Snr retired to Gore and lived in Anzac Street. Jim and Elizabeth had three children, Robert in 1967, Nicola, in 1970 and Melissa in 1973. Elizabeth entered wholeheartedly into community life at Pukerau and Kaiwera, playing a full part in the Country Womens Institute, and the Presbyterian Church as well as being involved in school organisations. Shortly before her death she was awarded her Silver badge from the C W I, and she was an Elder in the church for some time. In the C W I she was conductor of the branch choir which competed with success in the annual Institute competitions. As an outsider, she melded into the community and became an ideas person who contributed greatly to the general welfare of the community. She was a skilled pianist and had a strong soprano voice. She had trained in England as a teacher.

She was a very clever girl who did well in her schooling. She had a very warm personality and made very good friends during her school days and particularly during her

time in Teachers' college. I was duly introduced to some of these friends on our later visit to England and after her death learned of other friends we had not been able to visit. Elizabeth was a very good person with a caring love for her friends and she made very good quality friends. These friendships had been fostered down through the years and there was still a very strong bond between them. Elizabeth was a prolific correspondent, writing very interesting and newsy letters. She was very fond of her Uncle Wally and Aunt Rose and they of her. Her younger years were those of an 'only child' during wartime and she had spent much time at their home and with their family. Joyce was six years younger so she did not have a playmate at home for a number of years. She maintained close ties with her Uncles and Aunts and their families in New Zealand and Wally and Rose were like surrogate parents to her. They have preserved a card and a flower in a corner in their home in memory of her. It was the last greeting card she sent to them.

Everyday Life Again

My regular routine resumed on 26th September 2001 with golf at noon. The next day there was Senior Citizens Lunch and choir practice in the evening. On Friday I went to the funeral of an ex-client and former Knapdale boy. Saturday was golf again and Hugh Gardyne's 50th birthday in the evening. Sunday was choir practice at 9 40 am followed by the 10 am church service. The next week I made a short trip to Queenstown and enjoyed joining with the Frankton golf seniors for their weekly game which I had organised for a couple of years before coming back to Gore. I had a catch-up lunch with Dawn Gardyne. Mary Elder was putting the 'shine' on things each week in the house. I was on thank-the-speaker duty at the monthly Probus meeting¹. Thursdays also included the hour-long Senior Citizens Choir practice before the lunch at noon. About this time the choir did trips to Balclutha and to Invercargill rest homes and gave a concert at Tapanui. One Sunday afternoon Maurice Till gave a piano recital in the James Cumming Lecture room and this was very good value.

Elizabeth and I had exchanged a couple of letters while I was overseas and early in November I invited her for a visit to Maple Glen. We were just a little late to see the best of the rhododendrons but were spot on for the nesting season of the resident Canada Geese. We inadvertently passed near a goose on her nest and Elizabeth was attacked by the gander who was standing guard. It was a day with a threat of a shower or two and she was carrying a raincoat folded over her arm. The gander actually bit at her coat and Elizabeth ran for it. I turned and used my furred umbrella to counter any aggressive run he might make at me, all the time retreating slowly until he felt he had driven me far enough away from the nest.

¹ Sponsored by Rotary, Probus is a social club which meets monthly. There is always an interesting speaker. The club is open to both men and women and it makes a very good outing that retired couples can enjoy together. There are also many singles - widows, widowers and single working men and women who have retired. About this time the membership was upwards of 250 people and was to grow even larger. The Gore Probus Club is one of the largest in the country. Meetings were held in the Longford Events Centre in East Gore and they are a very popular event for the month. Attendance is usually about 60% of the membership - there are always folk travelling or unwell or visiting family and unable to attend for other reasons.

I looked round to find Elizabeth fifty or so metres away, well out of the danger zone. I felt a bit like a knight of old protecting his lady, although Elizabeth was not quite 'my lady' at that stage. After looking round the garden we went to the nursery area and who should we meet but my nephew Wally Elder and his wife Nelda who were also paying a visit to Maple Glen. I introduced Elizabeth as 'my neighbour'. They were probably the first to witness the growing attachment but I have no idea what they might have suspected.

I had a strange experience at Saturday golf early in November - it happened to be my father's birthday, the 10th of November. During the second nine holes I began to feel unwell. It was hard to pin down what was wrong but I began to feel a pain in the groin when I stooped for any reason - like when I had to get my ball out of the hole. After playing the fifteenth I decided I should not go on and so apologised and set off for home. Back at Devon Street I thought a nice hot bath might be relaxing and comforting. Once I was in the bath I discovered that I had developed a hernia and had a small egg-sized protrusion in my right groin. Of course, it was a Saturday so I headed to the Medical Centre to see the doctor on call for the weekend - it was Dr Sansom whom I had not met before. The diagnosis was simple and he made a somewhat futile attempt to reduce the hernia. There was no emergency department at Gore Hospital so he phoned Invercargill to inform them he was sending me down to them. How was I to get there? I felt capable of driving but if I was admitted for an immediate operation my car would be left in the hospital car park for who knew how long. I phoned Roger who I knew was in Gore but got no reply - I learned later that he had only just gone out. After some thought I phoned Elizabeth and she agreed to drive me. I packed a toilet bag and some basic clothing. She preferred to drive her own car. We arrived at Kew ED fairly early in the evening I was soon seen by a Registrar. With some careful manipulation she managed to reduce the obtrusion and discharged me to go home. She explained that I should first see my GP who would refer me to a surgeon. He in turn would make an appointment to see me at his surgery rooms and would fix a date for an operation. I did not say so to her but I was recalling an experience Dawn had had with the specialist she named and was saying to myself, 'No way.' I also recalled Ian Gardiner proudly showing me the scar from his bowel operation on his eightieth birthday and thinking, 'I would not be so proud of that stitching.' It looked rather rough to me.

Elizabeth brought me home and it was a much more comfortable trip than the journey down. I saw Dr Fettes on the next Tuesday morning and he agreed with my intention of going back to Ian Thompson in Dunedin. He had repaired a hernia some months previously and this was a leakage from that time. Rather oddly I suppose I was turning away from one surgeon in whom I did not have confidence to another whose work had failed! My family medical advisers spoke very highly of Ian and I was totally confident. I think he was a bit dismayed that his earlier repair had failed - the procedure had been done by him privately at Mercy Hospital in February 1999 and had cost me nearly \$3000 in total fees including hospital and anaesthetist charges. I think he might have been conscious of the cost of another private op at Mercy. He asked if I would mind having it done at Public as he had a vacancy in his theatre programme there and could fix me up in about two weeks time - I assured him that would be no problem.

In the meantime life was fairly full. I had organised a dinner party as a fund-raising effort for the Southland Hospice. The idea was that a host or hostess would invite people to dinner and ask them to bring a gift for the hospice in a sealed envelope with their name and address on it. I was keen to support the hospice as they had given Millie such wonderful care and I wanted to give something back. The guests were Jenny and Stuart Grieve, John and Ruth Falconer, Tom and Marion Falconer and Elizabeth. I had something of a hidden agenda as it got Elizabeth to dinner in a not too obvious way. Or was it obvious? It was a very successful party. I brought out the lace tablecloth and the silver cutlery and put on rather a nice meal. I recall I made a trifle with an apple base, sponge and custard - I had to make two lots of custard as the first batch was much too thin. After dinner most of the crowd insisted on pouring into the kitchen to wash up and I finally gave in to them. I asked them just to pile the clean dishes and I would put them away later. That left Elizabeth and Stuart and me by the fire. Judging by the laughter from the kitchen they were quite enjoying themselves - and so was I. Stuart had suffered a nasty stroke some time before and could only occasionally join in conversation.

The following Sunday the Calvin church congregation came to worship at St Andrews to mark the 40th Anniversary of the establishment of the branch parish by St Andrews. It was pointed out that St Andrews had postponed the building of their new church in order to help set up the Calvin venture. The combined service served to show how well Calvin had prospered.

The next weekend I had a couple of nights in the Alma Motel in Oamaru. I went up to the Wilson St Baptist Church in Timaru on the Sunday morning and visited Vic and Winnie afterwards. On my way back south I called at David Paton's at Morrisons in the Shag River Valley but found no one at home. I had Monday night with Trish and David Patrick at Outram, before going into Dunedin Public Hospital for the hernia repair. The procedure was duly completed very successfully and later in the week I was able to go home. I was driven home as I was not to drive or do heavy work like gardening for two weeks. The surgeon said he had inserted a piece of surgical gauze into the repair and it should not fail again. At the time of writing many years later, he has proved to have been correct. Back at home I had a couple of visits from the District Nurse to check the dressings and the progress of the wound.

I had noticed that the Messiah was to be performed in the Dunedin Town Hall early in December and I invited Elizabeth to come with me to see the performance. She agreed and we left about 4 o'clock for Dunedin, had dinner at Valentine's and thoroughly enjoyed the Messiah. I had taken a vacuum flask and we enjoyed a cup of coffee at the lookout layby on Three Mile Hill on our way out of Dunedin. The stop was a spectacular one as all the lights of Mosgiel were shining, together with the more distant lights of Allanton and Outram the airport giving a lovely view.

I was to spend Christmas with Dawn in Wellington so ferry tickets were booked. Our Dawn likes to have a proper Christmas celebration which always includes at least some of the old family trimmings. I headed for Christchurch on the 22nd of December with plans

for further time in the North Island after Christmas. Elizabeth left for a trip to England to spend Christmas with her parents and to help them through the worst part of the winter. She stayed until after her father's birthday in the first week of February.

I travelled further north up the island, visiting various folk along the way. I met up with Ron and Lesley and the girls at Te Kaha on the Bay of Plenty side of East Cape where they had a holiday house for a week or so. I think I only had a couple of nights or so there before they were due to head home, and I carried on to Gisborne for the rest of my holiday. It was the 4th February before I got home. Among the messages on my answering machine was one from Susan saying that she would be finishing up in her job in Christchurch early in February².

I was certainly into the run of things straight away. The Friday of my first week back I had a pacemaker check in Invercargill and lunched with sister Vera. Then I went up to Dunedin to be at the first service for Susan in Knox Church in George Street, Dunedin. Sharing in these closing services and inductions of hers was very special for me.

On the 20th of February I went to a very sad funeral at Pioneer Park for Natalie Young, wife of Lochy and a niece of Elizabeth's. Lochy and his father had been clients of my firm. Elizabeth had been asked to lead the main prayer. The service was conducted by Tracey Hicks who was later to become Mayor of Gore District and who was the manager of The Warehouse where Natalie had worked. It was the first funeral I had been to conducted by a funeral celebrant rather than a minister or priest. Natalie had a senior position at The Warehouse and the whole staff attended the funeral - relief workers came from Invercargill to free up the local workers. Natalie had been quite an artist and her two daughters had painted scenes on the sides of her casket as a tribute. The family had been picnicking at Jacks Bay near Owaka when she had lost her footing while fishing off some rocks and she had been drowned. The funeral was particularly sad as she was only about fifty years old.

The Waimumu Field Days had been started many years ago at Pukerau and had grown bigger and bigger every year. The sponsoring Young Farmers Club had purchased ground at Waimumu for what was now a major two-yearly event. Their popularity had grown to such an extent that car parking and entry money had become a big problem. The Gore Rotary Club had undertaken to provide parking stewards and in 2002 I was rostered on from 8.30 am till 1.30 pm on the Wednesday and from 1.30 pm till 3.00 pm on the Thursday. The job involved greeting every vehicle entering the grounds and collecting \$10 for each adult - the cars themselves were free ! Club members then directed the vehicles into the appropriate parking areas. I met many familiar faces as I was taking the gate money and on one occasion fell into an inadvertent trap. A driver handed me \$50 and I gave him his change. He kept his hand out. 'And the rest,' he said, claiming that he had given me a \$100 note. Well, I didn't usually come across \$100 notes and the colour was not dissimilar to the \$50. I checked my cash bag and sure enough there was the hundred dollar note, so he got the rest of his change. The job was quite tiring but I found it interesting and stimulat-

² Among her congregation was a couple named Armstrong. He was a son of Rev W A Armstrong who had been minister at Knapdale-Otama when I was a boy and I well remembered him - one of those strange coincidences. He had a distinct Irish brogue which sounded quite attractive. He and his wife were very fond of Susan and were a good support to her during her time at Knox on Bealey Ave.

ing - well within the capability of an 84-year-old.

Hugh Paterson and I had decided to organise a reunion of the ex-pupils of East Chatton school which had closed 54 years earlier - any former students would be by now be 59 years of age at the very least. When the school had closed in 1948 most of the pupils had gone to Maitland School. Celebrations there over the years had included East Chatton but these never coincided with East Chatton's vital dates - our school had been very much merged and largely overlooked in their celebrations. In the end I think we got 39 names but only about 21 of them were able to attend - some would have had to travel from as far away as Perth or Japan. There were some spouses as well so we had a very good number. We first assembled at the school site, and then adjourned to the home of Ian and Kathy Baird. Kathy's father was George Dun, a former pupil, and her Grandad was the Davie Dun who had offered me rides from time to time as I biked home from High School. My brother Vic came down from Timaru by coach for the occasion and stayed with me - he and Mary McKenzie were the two senior alumni present and they cut the cake together. Catering was delivered from Gore but Kathy and her cousin Jeannette McIntyre staffed the kitchen and served the afternoon tea. Jeanette's mother was Kathy Cross nee Dun and she had been my first Sunday School teacher at East Chatton. There was a real sense of fellowship and sharing of stories and many other former pupils were mentioned and recalled. Formal photographs were taken in Ian and Kathy's attractive garden and everyone voted the event a great success. I prepared a full folder of the event later and lodged a copy with the Gore District Museum. Jan Adams wrote up the story for the Ensign newspaper.

On the 5th of March I had calls in quick succession from Marie Elder and Janet Elder to say that my brother Vic had collapsed and was in ICU. I very much wondered if the journey to the school reunion had taxed him too much. He had travelled back in the upper deck of a double-decker bus and this might have exaggerated the effect of unevenness in the road surface. I made a quick trip up to see him but he was recovering well. It might have been at this time that I said to him, 'They say that Old Age is fifteen years older than you are.' He grinned at me and said, 'I have aged fifteen years in the last twelve months.' And he was pretty much right. Just recently members of his family told me that he had been really excited about the trip and very thrilled that he had been able to get down to meet with his old school chums. I think it was one of only two or three visits he made to Gore after his retirement to Timaru in 1977.

The following week I was asked to talk to the local Croydon Flying Club dinner about my experiences in Air Force Training in Canada. I found it interesting to go over my diaries and logbook and assemble the details to enable me to do this. A week later I was saddened to learn of Roger Tayles' death and went to his funeral at Tapanui. They had been on holiday at Mt Maunganui and he had collapsed in the water while swimming. My family had a long association with the Tayles family. Fanny Tayles had been from the Hendedrson family and was a sister of Andrew Johnston's wife Nellie. Roger's wife Dawn had been a Baptist missionary. They were farming near Kelso and he was very active among the young people of the church. I recall that he played the bagpipes. There was a very large number of mourners at the service as he and Dawn were highly respected. After the funeral I went through

to Dunedin to enter Mercy Hospital for another regular bladder check. I stayed overnight in Dunedin with Susan and Roger who took me in at 7.30 am and collected me a few hours later. The result was good. I stayed a second night in Dunedin as I was not allowed to drive on the day of the procedure.

Since returning from her visit to England Elizabeth had taken two separate car trips north of close to three weeks each with friends from England. My diary notes that she was home on 4th April. One of these couples were her father's cousin and his wife. They had started their trip down south and before they headed north she had asked me to join them for dinner one evening to give Cyril 'some male company.' The second trip ended in Auckland and she was going to have to drive all the way home to Gore on her own. Her Uncle Wally and Aunt Rose were concerned about this long and lonely trip and she invited them to come south with her for company and a visit. She again invited me in to make up a four while they were staying with her. I learned that they were going home the following week and had been wondering how they could break their journey in Timaru in order to see some friends who had just recently moved there from Papatoetoe. I decided it would be good if I went up to see Vic and Winnie and offered to take them to Timaru. They could then fly home from there after a day or two with their friends. Rose had an ankle in plaster at the time - she set herself up in the back seat with one leg up and declared herself very comfortable. I had a nice time with Vic and Win and then booked into a B&B out on Seadown Road. This is the district which produced the young Phar Lap, the famous New Zealand racehorse who broke records and had many successes in New Zealand, United States and Australia. He was born at Seadown and there is a very lifelike statue of him on the corner of an intersection near where I stayed.

Later in the month the Senior Citizens Choir gave a concert in the Community Hall in Roxburgh which I was asked to MC. The concert was very well received with quite a good attendance of locals to enjoy it. On Anzac Day I attended the Dawn Parade and then went out to Waikaka to join in the service and parade there.

That afternoon I went to Queenstown for the 15th Anniversary of the Wakatipu Probus Club. This was held in Rydges Hotel and was a great occasion. It was lovely to meet up again with former committee members and other friends after a period of years. I stayed on for golf on Saturday and attended church at Frankton on the Sunday before coming home that night.

I had noticed in passing a hoarding outside Balmoral Church in Balclutha about an annual garden tour fundraiser for the church. I recalled this taking place when Susan was acting minister there. Knowing Elizabeth's fondness for her garden, I suggested a trip to Balclutha to take in this garden day. She was happy to do so and we had a very happy afternoon in and around the town with afternoon tea at the church hall.

Elizabeth and I had been spending quite a bit of time together and it was evident that this was more than just a friendship. I challenged her to a Mystery Day out - she was to supply lunch and I would shout dinner. Did she like and trust me enough to undertake

a mystery trip like this? She accepted. We set off about 10 o'clock and headed out through Waikaka and Greenvale and on to The Leithen and then over the Pomahaka River to Moa Flat. We stopped for coffee before dropping down into Ettrick with that magnificent view from the high point over the Teviot Valley stretching from Roxburgh right down to beyond Millers Flat. We crossed the Clutha River at Millers Flat where we had a comfort stop before taking the road up into the hills. The countryside gradually changed from grass fields to tussock as far as the eye could see towards Lake Onslow. It was a lovely early autumn day with the weather clearing after a minor cold snap. The day was delicious with just a slight nip in the air from the dying southerly. We had lunch at a spot overlooking the lake. We had brought a folding table and folding chairs so we were able to eat in comfort. Lake Onslow has a small dam at the outlet and feeds the power station across the river from Roxburgh. A couple who were travelling through from Paerau came over and talked with us. They told us the road was quite good so after lunch we roamed on over the tussock-covered plateau around Lake Onslow and onwards to Paerau and eventually to Patearoa, Waipiata and Ranfurly. It was all a glorious drive. We stopped for coffee in Ranfurly at a picnic table opposite the Hotel. The thought occurred to me that we looked just like a couple on an outing - I suppose we were! Elizabeth took over the driving to Clyde where I had booked a table at the Old Post Office Hotel Restaurant. We changed from our summer shorts and shirts to more conventional garb and enjoyed a very good meal. Later we drove home on a lovely clear night and a fairly quiet road arriving home late in the evening after a 12-hour day.

When we finally reached the stage of realising that we were in love with each other, the bogey of the difference in ages arose in my mind. Elizabeth was nearly twenty-one years younger than me. I told her that if we married it might not be long before she found herself a one-person matron-cook-laundress-housekeeper-carer-nursemaid to a geriatric husband! I suppose that I had never been against a difference in ages between couples but had always thought of the situation as it applied in the case of younger people. I thought that at my age it was pushing the boundaries too far. But it did not faze Elizabeth. It was much later that I realised that she had married Jim with an age difference of about fourteen years and had taken on a husband who had a heart condition from his teenage years. I think she looked at me with the feeling that I had a physical age of nearer seventy five and was still quite vigorous. The virtual age difference might be roughly the same as she had already lived with for many years. She said that if we had five or eight years together it would be well worth it.

I finally decided to pray specifically about it and received an immediate and clear answer which showed that God had known all about the problem months before. I was about two months behind with my daily Scripture Union readings because of holidays and various other interruptions. Right from the time I started praying specifically about the problem several readings came up which were centred very positively on marriage. The finding of a bride for Isaac, Jacob going back to his ancestors to find a wife, the marriage of Boaz and Ruth, the wedding in Cana of Galilee, the Church as the Bride of Christ, the Bride referred to in Revelation and there were a number of other references that pointed to marriage in a positive light. I had no further doubts. I phoned her. 'Could I come over for a while?' 'Well, I was about to have an early night.' 'I just want to ask you something.' 'All

right.' When I asked her to marry me she simply said, 'Yes.'

Not So Ordinary Routine.

So everything in the garden was lovely - or was it? A few days later Elizabeth had an appointment for a mammogram. Then she had a phone message to come back for a follow-up. She told me of this and I went down to Invercargill with her the next day to support her. We were asked to wait for the surgeon, Murray Pfeiffer, to see her. She asked me to come into the interview with her. Mr Pfeiffer studied the picture and examined her but could not detect anything. Nevertheless, the picture showed an unexplained shadow and he scheduled her for a biopsy. This was taken very soon, the result was positive and the alternatives were presented. The prognosis if a lumpectomy was performed were staggeringly in favour of success and eventually she decided to have this instead of a mastectomy. There was an amusing misunderstanding when his nurse told him Elizabeth would like to have it done in time for a wedding in about two months time. He looked at Elizabeth rather quizzically and said, 'Is being at a wedding more important than this?' 'But it is Elizabeth who is to be married,' said the nurse. Mr Pfeiffer reacted quite differently at this news. The nurse phoned through there and then to his secretary and found he had a space in his operating schedule in about ten days time. So Elizabeth was booked in for that space. She had the biopsy on July 5th and was admitted for the main operation on July 19th. She was in hospital about five days.

On 5th July I took Elizabeth to Invercargill hospital for her Biopsy which confirmed that there was a very small Cancer spot. After much consideration she decided to have a Lumpectomy instead of the more radical Mastectomy. In the midst of this I had my biennial driving test for my driving licence, and the first anniversary of Wilfred's death came round. On 16th July Elizabeth had an appointment with Mr Pfeiffer at 11 00 am and a pre op medical check at 1 30 pm. The next day she had the main operation which went quite straight forwardly.

It was a strange experience from my point of view to have this crisis so soon in our relationship but I never for one moment thought of not supporting her in every way possible. We had made our promise to each other the week before and as far as we were concerned that was it. We were bound together though the 'knot' had not yet been tied. The reader will have gathered that we had already discussed the timing of our wedding but our families had not yet been informed. We felt that there was no point at our time of life in delaying getting married and had settled on 17th of August. Elizabeth duly had the operation and made a good recovery. I went down each day and spent the actual time during the operation shopping with Elizabeth's daughter-in-law Stacey including a visit to The Pumpkin Patch. I saw a very pretty hat which I bought for Stacey's daughter Libby and she wore it later at the wedding. Stacey also was very attentive to Elizabeth and was down in Invercargill most days in support. I got to know her very well during those few days. Stacey was very fond of her Mother-in-law. When Elizabeth was discharged from hospital I brought her home to the farm where she would spend two or three nights. There was a funny incident when Stacey was preparing her room as her bags were being brought in. Little Libby was about two-and-a-half years old. She pointed to the near side of the bed

where the covers were turned down and said, 'Gran's bed.' Then she walked round the bed to the other side and said, 'Ivan's bed.' I had only been around the family for about three or four weeks but she had caught up with the situation. 'No,' I said, 'I am going to my home tonight.'

In the meantime we had to break our news to our various family members. Elizabeth went to the wedding of a close friend of Melissa's in Timaru only two days later and had to keep the secret from her close friend Catherine Baker as she had not yet got round the family. She could tell Robert and Stacey and Nicola in person but had to phone Melissa in England. I think Nicola exclaimed, 'Holey Moley!' as her first reaction. Melissa also received the news with a measure of surprise. Having been overseas for most of the time since her father's death she had not experienced the day to day situation of him not being about the home. However all of them recognised that she was fully entitled to take this step.

I had the job to do by telephone. The news was received quite excitedly by my sons and their families but Susan and Dawn reacted with some reservation! I think it was just the feeling that in some measure their Mum's place was being taken. However, they were fair in recognising that I was quite entitled to go ahead. It was a bit of a shock at first and they needed time to absorb the fact and accustom themselves to the idea. All of our new step-children treated us very well and cooperated fully in the wedding. The whole thing came with a big element of surprise to me as I'd had no particular plan to remarry and had expected to just carry on living on my own until it was time to look for some kind of residential care. However, the lady was there right next door - we appealed to each other more and more and the end result became inevitable.

Late in June Dawn came down for a brief visit presumably to check up on what this rascal of a Dad had been up to. We were at the farm on Friday night and on Saturday and Sunday the three of us had lunch at No 9 and No 7 respectively. We took Dawn to Momona and then Elizabeth took me to meet Isla and Ewen McPhail in Mosgiel and Gladys and Harold Davidson in Balclutha. Isla and Gladys are sisters of Jim Young.

Elizabeth and I had talked and decided that we did not want to shut Jim and Millie out of our lives. We asked that they be spoken of freely in the future. They were not to be forgotten but to be remembered, even though their physical presence had been removed and we had been learning to live as single persons. I think we had both adopted the attitude that while our partner was no longer there, we were still alive and had the rest of our lives to live. Elizabeth had adapted her property to provide her with the set-up to fit her personal requirements as a single person. I was also making my property as convenient for my purposes as possible. Both of us were pursuing the continuing nature of our situation at that time. For instance, I had bought a computer and was able to put a desk in my bedroom. This would not have been possible if Millie was still alive and it would have been an obtrusion in the lounge.

We were suddenly confronted each with an entirely new situation and there were matters that called for decision and attention. For instance we decided that eventually we

would be laid to rest beside our respective original partners. In the meantime, where were we going to live? Would we sell both our houses and buy jointly elsewhere rather than one be asked to live where the ghost of the previous partner might linger? I don't believe in ghosts but there could be some element of thought in this direction. Perhaps our decision to live in Elizabeth's house was made easier from this point of view as Jim had only lived there for a very short time. Although they had bought the house earlier, they had not moved in until quite a bit of renovation work had been done to it. The decision to live in her house was reached in the main because of the difference in our ages. We reasoned that my death was likely to occur first and in this event she could then continue uninterrupted in her own house. That meant that my house would be sold. but I will come back to that situation later.

There was a nice little interlude just four days before the wedding when Elizabeth turned the tables and challenged me to a Mystery Day out. I was driving and she directed me north on the main road through Pukerau, Waipahi and Clinton and I was beginning to wonder how long this was going to continue. She finally instructed me to turn left at the Waiwera intersection to the home of Ken Telford. The conductor of the Senior Citizens Choir had arranged a choir outing on the day before our wedding and I had reluctantly indicated I could not go. Elizabeth knew the Telford family to which she was connected through Eion Young's wife and she had arranged this surprise by way of compensation. Ken ran a hel-lebore nursery and the very attractive grounds feature many rhododendrons. The house is the original Clifton Station homestead and has nearly thirty rooms. Because of Elizabeth's family connection we were shown through all the ground floor of the house - the second floor houses the private quarters. The west wing comprised the original servants quarters and kitchen which had not yet been restored. I had heard this mansion many years before but it was still a mystery to me. I found the visit very interesting and enjoyable. I felt I had stolen a march on the choir. I do not know how much of the house was shown to them.

Having plighted ourselves to marriage we felt that at our age we should proceed as soon as it was convenient. Melissa and Jonathon were happy to come home from England - in fact they seemed happy to see home again for a spell before completing their 'Overseas Experience.' Our chosen date fitted in well enough for the other members of each family and preparations were put in hand. We chose the Waikoikoi Church as it was part of Elizabeth's parish and the building with the most convenient set-up to serve afternoon tea for the expected number of people. David Anderson was the Pukerau minister with whom Elizabeth had a lot of contact in her role as Elder and as organist - we asked him to conduct the service. He gave us the opportunity to decide on the wording of the central parts of the ceremony. Our engagement had generated so much interest among our friends that we decided to invite a wider circle to the church ceremony and for afternoon tea. In fact the announcement of our engagement seemed to evoke a spontaneous feeling of pleasure from each of our circles of friends. I had formed a very high opinion of Elizabeth and it was endorsed to me in no uncertain manner by her friends. Fortunately I gathered that I was approved as suitable to be her new partner. Our surnames led to our being described during this period as the 'Young-Elders.'

Robert and Stacey did a very nice thing in hosting a dinner at their home the night before the wedding. All the new step-siblings and spouses and Jean Springett were included. Jamie and Hannah joined with the Young children and Cameron McGrouther at the childrens' table. This and the reception were good opportunities for the two families to meet. Someone remarked that it was nice to suddenly have all these extra brothers and sisters.

We were very chuffed at the number of people who came to witness our marriage and wish us well. I was touched by the presence of many of my nieces and nephews as well as a number of cousins and old friends. The Pukerau APW catered for the afternoon tea for which we made a donation. Jamie and Hannah were deputed to take the cake round and offer a piece to the guests. Stacey had organised Libby and James to give us a pair of teddy bears dressed in bridal outfits and Jamie and Hannah took great delight in scattering rose petals over us. We involved each of our children in the ceremony in some way. I have often chuckled that in the choice of our eldest children to sign the register as witnesses, we chose the worst writers in the two families. - it was still legal. In the church after the ceremony we had asked Jenny Grieve to speak on behalf of friends as she knew both of us pretty well. In response to an open invitation Ewen McPhail, welcomed me to the Young family as a fellow in-law in an amusing and friendly impromptu speech. I appreciated that as I had known him fairly well years earlier as a client and as a member of a well-known Waikaka Valley family. Elizabeth's close friend and accompaniste for her Womens Club choir Kath Hall played the organ and another good friend, Marjorie Morrison, sang a solo. After Jenny and Ewen had spoken I made a bridegroom's speech to thank all the folk for their good wishes and indicate some of our hopes for the future. We had some very warm fuzzies about the afternoon and all the love and good wishes given to us.

We had also arranged for an evening reception in the Gore Womens Club which we restricted to our respective immediate families. Elizabeth's siblings were in fact her in-laws. One very important guest was my niece Jean Springett from England. I was very touched that she had spent all that money and time to come out and join the occasion. She told me on one occasion that I was her favourite uncle. I thought quickly and said, 'Jean, how many uncles do you have?' 'Just the one,' she replied!! I have had a very close relationship with Jean and her sister Margaret Bonney who were Millie's only nieces. Margaret had also planned to come with Jean but her husband Geoff had just received bad news about his heart condition and she felt she could not leave him at that stage. Folk were seated at tables of six and I arranged for three people from each table to move anti-clockwise between courses so that the two families would have a greater chance to get to know each other. Jamie and Hannah were included in the reception and after two moves they came to me excitedly to say that they had worked out that they would get to the Top Table and sit with the Bride and Bridegroom. I did not tell them that I had carefully organised it to work out that way!! We felt it was a very friendly occasion. Jim Youngs sisters and brother were very warm in their welcome to me and have remained so. Some time shortly after our wedding, Gladys Davidson introduced me to someone as her 'brother-in-law' - that neatly simplified in a nice way a somewhat convoluted relationship. I returned the compliment much later at George Johnston's funeral at Clydevale when someone asked how we knew each other. I

said, 'She is my sister-in-law.' Gladys looked quite approving and I wondered if the enquirer might have spent the rest of the day trying to puzzle it out!

The reception dinner was a very friendly and intimate occasion and the two families enjoyed the chance to meet and get to know one another. The opportunities since have not been very frequent. I think all seven of our children spoke and wished us well in our life together. We also had a good selection of photos taken by Geoff Horrell at the beginning of the reception.

We escaped late in the evening to drive to Balclutha where we had booked into a motel. The original timetable called for us to leave about 9 pm - this proved way too optimistic as it was not until a good deal later that we got away. We had arranged to have the key left in the lock of the motel unit and came in quietly about midnight. Elizabeth was so delighted with her big floral bouquet that she took it with us. We had two nights there and when I settled the bill as we left the manager said the cleaning girls had commented about the lovely bouquet and he wondered if we had celebrated an important anniversary. I left them to wonder.

After the Wedding

We knew that Ron and Lesley and the girls were catching a flight from Momona towards midday the next day so we decided to surprise them by turning up at the airport to see them off. There were indeed some surprised faces when they spotted us and we enjoyed the time until they were called to board their flight. It was good for Elizabeth to meet them again and increase the sense of familiarity. But they were soon off and away and we were left to ourselves. Later in the day we called on Ewen and Isla McPhail in Mosgiel. Isla and Elizabeth were very good friends as well as being sisters-in-law and Ewen was good company and very friendly. We also called on Gladys and Harold Davidson in Balclutha and had an evening meal with them.

The next morning we vacated our motel and headed towards Dunedin with the day to ourselves and all day to complete the journey. Just out of Balclutha we saw the Hillend turn off and as neither of us had been through that country we suddenly thought we would detour that way. It was very interesting farmland and we passed the Hillend School and a good number of homesteads. The country was hilly with deep gullies and was all fairly high. We continued on until we saw a signpost to Waitahuna and soon dropped down into the valley on to the main Milton-Central Otago road. We turned towards Milton down through the Manuka Gorge. In Mosgiel we booked into a motel very close to Ewen and Isla's home. We had lunch with them at a nice place in Factory Road. My niece Jean Springett had booked her homeward flight from Dunedin and was returning from a trip to the north to catch her flight from its starting point. We met her at the plane - to her surprise - and took charge of her for most of the day until Susan was free to entertain her. She was flying out again the next day. We took her for a drive round Dunedin so she could see the shape of the city and some of the views from vantage points. I recall that from the airport we drove up to the northern slopes of Saddle Hill with the magnificent panorama of Mosgiel and the Taieri Plain. Then Brighton and the ocean came into view and we headed over the hill to St

Clair and up to Lawyers Head where we took photos with the backdrop of the St Kilda and St Clair beaches. It was a lovely time spent with Jean and I know she enjoyed it very much. We duly delivered her to Susan and returned to our motel in Mosgiel. We managed to fit in a pacemaker check and an interview with Gerry Wilkins - like a maintenance check for the new husband. All seemed to be going well. During this time we also paid a visit to Vic and Win in their apartment at Chatsford Village in Mosgiel.

On the Thursday we headed north and spent the night in a motel in Timaru. The motel sported a spa pool which we enjoyed. The next day we travelled round through Fairlie and the MacKenzie Country and finished up at the Lake Hawea Hotel. After our meal we went on to Wanaka to meet up with the Young family who were all having a week together in Wanaka after the wedding. One night we found ourselves baby-sitting the 'babies' who included Nicola who had a bad cold and was confined to bed. We moved to a motel just out of Wanaka on the second day and all the family had dinner back in the Lake Hawea Hotel where we had stayed the previous night. The motel was lovely. We were accommodated in an outside lodge which was very quiet and private. I recall breakfast as being especially good. We were back home in Gore by the following Thursday in time for Elizabeth to have her pupil Lee Given in for her piano lesson. Jono and Mel left from Momona the next day to visit friends in Christchurch and after seeing them off we visited Harold and Gladys in Balclutha and also Ruby Young who had been married to Bob Young. Over the years I had met Bob and Ruby casually at Frankton church during holiday times. Bob was involved in a partnership in the Frankton Motels for which I was accountant. I had respected him very much and found as I became involved with the family that he was very highly regarded within the family circle. He had taken over a run-down farm after the war with a rehab loan and had made a great success of it. I found that Ruby was a member of the Copland family of Kaiwera and that her brothers had been clients of mine for many years. Bob had died some time before Jim.

My appointment diary now had a line down the middle of the page with my appointments on the left and Elizabeth's on the right. I still had my own commitments and so did she - Women's Club, music lessons, Pukerau Session, Pukerau organ-playing, Womens Club Choir, Bible in Schools.

We were now faced with the challenge of melding our separate effects into one household. Elizabeth had a problem as she was storing some of Jono and Melissa's things while they were overseas. I went through my clothes and weeded out some seldom or never used clothes for the Salvation Army shop. One problem was my computer and desk. I had started on this autobiography and wanted to continue it. Elizabeth surrendered the sun porch off the living room in her house for this purpose. After the alterations at the farm there were some surplus shelves complete with brackets. I got my handyman neighbour to help me fix them round the wall and I moved my office in. This included a freestanding bookshelf, a two-drawer steel cabinet and the computer desk with the computer on it. There was just room for an arm chair but Elizabeth virtually lost the use of the room as a sun porch and a sewing room. However, we enjoyed many a morning coffee on her patio at the north end of the house as well as in the sun porch from time to time. There was therefore

a great deal of reorganising to accommodate me in the house. My furniture was virtually all surplus so it did not add to the problem. Nor was my bed as I just shared the bed with her! We felt that it was desirable to keep separate phones as I would be tying up the line from time to time with my computer and she used her phone a lot concerning her own activities and calls from the family. We therefore got an extra line in and this was achieved fairly easily - this saved us having to notify a lot of people of a change of phone number. I also got my Sky satellite disc transferred to the new site. It was good to have this facility but my pattern of use changed quite considerably. Indeed the whole pattern of my daily life was quite changed.

My house was for sale. I had an appointment with the real estate agent Fergus Nicholson about this matter. There were items of maintenance I wanted to complete before putting it on the market but he wanted to include it in a batch of homes he was including in an auction in about five weeks time and wanted a lead-in time of a month or so to publicise it and have Open Homes. I also had a personal approach from Vern and Joyce Mason who were wanting to move off the hill. Joyce was also attracted to the house in much the same way as Millie had been nine years earlier. However, I was reluctant to deal with them privately as I foresaw difficulty in arriving at a fair price. The matters which needed attention around the property were some panels under the bay windows of the lounge and main bedroom that needed renewing, the painting of the false shutters beside the windows, painting the back fence and painting the garage door. Jono and Mel made the mistake of coming back home for a week or two before heading back to England and offered to help. I got my handyman neighbour to renew the panels under the bay windows and picked them out in blue paint - they needed three coats. Jono assumed the task of doing the fence and sanded it down thoroughly before painting it. Melissa worked on the garage door and other jobs. I'm afraid I tired them out - I was spending so much time on the job myself and perhaps they felt they needed to keep up. I had given Fergus a date and finished up about five o'clock that night. The first Open Home was the next afternoon and it was interesting to stand back from the window of Elizabeth's living room and see the succession of people looking round the property.

A new type of commitment started to appear in our diary - 'picking up Jamie' or being at the farm for the children after school or having Libby for the afternoon. It was interesting for me to have close involvement with the grandchildren generation. There was an entry in the diary for the AGM of Gore Livestock Co in which Jim had owned shares which had passed on to Elizabeth. At this meeting it was reported that the property had been sold and the company was going into liquidation and she subsequently received a very welcome pay-out. The capital tied up in the saleyards had been unproductive of income for many years.

We attended the funeral of Bruce Johnston in September. Bruce had been a client of mine for many years. He and Jo had retired to Frankton and I had sung bass with him in the choir. Bruce had suffered severely with Alzheimer's for about four years and had been in a home in Christchurch near a family member. The service was held in the Waikaka Valley Church and there were many people present whom I knew. I felt sad for the final years of a

very nice gentleman and client who had become a friend.

Mel and Jono flew out for England late in September and about a week later were off to Greece for the holiday which they had booked previously. We were invited to a Barbeque at Eion and Liz Young's Hartfelle property at Kaweku. Eion was a son of Bob and Ruby Young who were mentioned earlier. Over the years Bob had planted thousands of daffodils along his roadline and in two or three of the small fields near the house - these were in full bloom and making a very lovely sight. His son Eion has added to the plantings since taking over the farm.

An interesting visitor early in October was Roy Elder from Argentina. Roy was the son of my second cousin and I had met him and his wife Gloria while in Buenos Aires. Gloria was a very beautiful girl and they had a son about four years old. Roy was a professional saxophonist. He had obtained a grant of free air travel to New Zealand from the Qantas Airline and was travelling New Zealand presenting South American style instrumental music in schools and universities. He had been in touch with Kathryn Smith and me about this trip and we had undertaken to escort him through the South Island. sector of his tour. Elizabeth and I went through to Christchurch and stayed with Jono's parents Pat and Alan Clease. Ron happened to be in Christchurch at a computer course and we picked him up on our way to the performance at the university. In fact, Ron was a few minutes late so Elizabeth and Pat and I went on ahead and Alan brought him along shortly after. All nine members of the Sinclair family from Oamaru were there - Minnie had been a Paton and they were second cousins to Roy. We had undertaken to transport Roy and came on to Oamaru after the performance, booking in to the Alpine Motel. The next day we took him on a tour of Oamaru, including the places associated with his Great-Grandfather James Elder and the place where his Grandfather Robert had been brought up. We came on to Dunedin where we had a pot luck tea at John and Janet Elder's after which Roy went through his repertoire. John and Janet had done a good job of inviting people and the house seemed quite crowded. The next morning we toured Dunedin, also looking out places of particular interest family-wise and then came on to Gore. Another pot-luck tea followed at Kathryn and George Smith's home at Mimiha. They had done a good job of mustering quite a good audience most of whom were family members. We left Roy with Kathryn and George and I think they took him on a wide-ranging tour the next day.

The marketing of my house was proceeding. Although a large number of people came to the Open Homes real enquiries were made by only two or three couples. Vern and Joyce Mason were very keen but they first offered too low a price. In the meantime the agents received another offer at a considerably higher figure. Vern and Joyce almost matched this figure and I decided to accept their slightly lower offer as they would be our neighbours and I knew they would cherish the house and garden. Hindsight at the time of writing has proved the correctness of that opinion. However, when they got the LIM report it showed only one toilet according to Council records. It appeared that when we had the bathroom renovated and the old toilet put into the laundry, no notification was made to the Council. Under the old regulations this would not have been necessary and the new regulations had only come in at the beginning of the year the job was done. My

plumber was nearing retirement and may have been unaware of the new procedure. I had to employ a draughtsman to draw up a plan and register it with the Council which had no objection to the alteration and all was well - it cost me \$160. Now that the house was sold the furniture and effects had to be dealt with. I first went through and labelled with a small coloured sticker the items I wanted to keep and shift through to No 7. The family had already done a similar choosing before the wedding. It was a brilliant idea of Susan's that allowed family to indicate items which they would like to keep. The furnishings had all been left in place until the sale was completed. It was notable that the TV, which was fairly new and had my sticker on it from the start, had acquired a number of other stickers, most of them hopefully applied by Jamie and Hannah! After the sale was completed Susan and Roger took their items by truck to Dunedin and I arranged for a moving firm to deliver Ron and Dawn's goods to them. Once the sale had been signed I had sorted all the stuff into different rooms according to its destination. There were two or three pictures to be sent to David in USA and this cost over \$400. As with all clean-ups of this kind there were leftovers which were not wanted. I held a sale in Elizabeth's garage and we sold over \$600 worth of items. I was highly amused at the very last people who were a young couple. They looked at everything that was left and then the girl picked up a lemon squeezer for 20c - my last BIG sale! This sale marked the virtual dismantling of the Elder home and there was a certain amount of significance in that. However, the items that were valued had all been distributed to the family in the way which would have happened in the event of my death. However, I was not dead and was able to watch it happening. The fact that I was going into a new and exciting stage of my life helped to ease the sense of finality. After all, it was not final at all.

On the 25th of October I signed the transfer of my house and October 30th was settlement day. My real estate agent said they had sold our house with so little work that he had decided to refund half the commission. Elizabeth and I decided to celebrate.

We left late one afternoon for Te Anau and booked into a motel. We planned to go to Milford the next day and the motelier recommended a mini-bus conducted tour to us. We took her advice. The tour stopped at half a dozen places along the way to see interesting spots and at one point to allow us to take a walk through a patch of bush. We arrived at the spectacular Chasm gorge at the same time as a coach-load of Japanese tourists and two other buses were coming and going from the car park as we left. We went on a boat tour of Milford Sound. Our boat had fewer passengers and I'm sure was more pleasant than the other more crowded tourist boat. It was a lovely day and our boat took us right out to sea as well as giving us a good view of all the interesting spots along the steep walls of the sound. The return trip to Te anau was more direct and we were able to carry on home in the evening after a meal. Two days later we were off to the farm after lunch - we were back on the Saturday so we were probably on a baby-sitting overnight stay.

About this time I attended the funeral of Kitty Bredin. She was the widow of Tom and they had been very faithful members of the Baptist Church. They were Irish and had emigrated to New Zealand shortly after the war to work on the Roxburgh Hydro Dam. Later they came to Gore where Tom worked as a plumber. They were very sincere Christians in a

very conservative evangelical way and were very kind and helpful in many ways. On retirement they lived in the greenkeeper's residence at the golf course. Tom took up golf and also helped his son Maurice with a lot of the greenkeeping jobs. Tom did not develop a very full golf swing but he did learn to hit straight and earned the nickname of 'Down the Middle Tom.' He seldom left the fairway and there were times when he won matches against lower handicap players by simply keeping out of trouble. I played as his partner one time in a four-ball match. Near the end of the match he gaily declined an offer by the opposition to mark their ball and then neatly bumped their ball into the hole with his putt - an automatic loss of hole. All ended OK as we won the match without needing that hole.

From then until Christmas, Elizabeth was having radiotherapy at Dunedin Hospital. As a general rule they would arrange late afternoon appointments for out of town patients on a Monday and early morning appointments on a Friday to allow for travel time - the treatment itself takes only a very short time. There was underground parking available but the access is very tight and there were usually very few spaces available. Manoeuvring in the confined space was difficult for an old guy like me with fused upper vertebrae. The staff in the unit were very kind and helpful. We met some people we knew who were also getting treatment. During one of these weeks in Dunedin the Senior Citizens Choir travelled to Mosgiel to entertain the Club there and Elizabeth and I just joined the choir from Dunedin. One week when I had Senior Citizens business Elizabeth stayed a couple of nights with Susan but at other times we stayed with Nicola and occasionally in a motel. At the time I was still President of the Senior Citizens Club.

I had become very conscious of my poor hearing after joining the Young family. I found that they could be having a quiet conversation without me hearing a word that was said. So during these weeks I consulted the Dunedin Hearing Clinic who confirmed what I already knew. I went ahead to have hearing aids provided at my own expense as I was keen to have help without any further delay. I feared that if I waited for public funding it would take a long time for my turn to come up.

The Sunday School put on a play called Papa Panov which was about an old man who was a cobbler and who wanted to give a present to Jesus. They roped me into the old cobbler part and the children played the parts of the travellers who called while passing by. Some of the text was sung to music and I had a very sympathetic accompanist in Elizabeth. I had never done any solo singing and found it difficult to get the right entries. At one stage I dried up and could not remember my lines. The producer prompted me but my poor hearing meant that she had to do so three times - it was a bit embarrassing. Once I got the start again I was OK. The kids said to me afterwards, 'You forgot your lines'. Elizabeth was asked to sing for the Blind Foundation Christmas Party. I found it delightful to have Elizabeth's company at the various end-of-year special meetings and Christmas events that year. A number of friends invited us out for meals - Gordon and Margaret Pullar, Catherine and Malcolm Baker, Joyce and Vern Mason. Elizabeth was still involved with the Session of Pukerau Church and was reluctant to pull out as she felt the minister, David Anderson, needed support as he struggled to build up the dwindling numbers. There had been a steady movement of district people into town over a number of years without younger

people coming in to the church to take their place.

As we were planning to go north for Christmas we had an early Young family Christmas Dinner at the farm on the 14th of December. Radiotherapy was continuing during this time and was scheduled to finish in time for us to drive north. However, the machine malfunctioned on the last day causing the last session to be a day late - we had a confirmed ferry booking for the following day. That morning Elizabeth's treatment was scheduled for 7.50 am and I had a hearing aid appointment at 9 am - we took off for Christchurch directly after that. We had a good trip although Elizabeth was tired after all of her treatments. We stayed the night in Christchurch with Jono's parents Pat and Alan Cleese who are a lovely Christian couple. Melissa has a very warm relationship with them. Elizabeth had become a firm friend and I found it easy to make friends with them also. The next day it was on to Picton where we had to report by 5 pm - we arrived in Wellington about 9 pm.

North Island Trip

The next evening Dawn had a BBQ out on her terrace. She had a charcoal cooker which worked very well and I recall a lovely summer evening. Guests included Dawn's friends from Pauatahanui Jane and Gerry Zuccollo, her doctor friend Vasanthe from Hamilton and Vaughan and Neela from Karori. Vaughan was an colleague from the hospital. These people all knew each other well and it was a very friendly evening.

Dawn was very busy with end of year at work and she had organised a cottage in Martinborough for two nights and Elizabeth and I headed there on the Saturday morning. On our way we called on a niece of Elizabeth's called Inez Conway who lived in the Akatarawa Valley. We stopped in Featherston to visit the Fell Locomotive Museum where they have one of the special locomotives once used on the Rimutaka Incline rail track up the Eastern side of the Rimutakas. These engines used four grip wheels on a raised centre rail in order to tackle the steep incline. Many years ago a long tunnel under the hill made them redundant. The tunnel also shortened the travel time from Wellington to the Wairarapa and nowadays quite a number make the daily commute by rail.

Duck Back Cottage was a real charmer. It was a simple little old cottage which had been beautifully modernised inside while retaining the old-style exterior. It had an unusual roof line which I think suggested the name. The larder was fully equipped for cooked breakfasts for each of the two mornings and we arranged other meals out.

One lovely sunny day we took the trip down to Cape Palliser on the very southern-most point of the North Island. We marvelled at the rock pillars in an area known as the Putangirua Pinnacles. These have been formed by erosion of softer material leaving quite high and very spectacular pinnacles - we felt quite dwarfed by them towering above us. The valley was very warm as we climbed up high enough to get a good view. Further along

the coast was a small village with fishing boats hauled up on trailers out of the water onto the shingle beach - there was a scattering of old tractors that were used for this purpose. At Cape Palliser is a lighthouse marking the southerly point round which in earlier days coastal shipping out of Wellington sailed on its way to Napier and Gisborne and Auckland. During the outing we saw much Manuka in full flower, and some of the extensive vineyards for which the Martinborough area is now well known.

On the Sunday morning we found our way to First Church in Martinborough where we enjoyed a Christmas service led by their minister, Barbara Curteis and enjoyed fellowship with the congregation over coffee afterwards.

On our way back to Wellington, we detoured right through the Akatarawa Valley to Waikanae. The road is very narrow and winding, often carved out of the hillsides. We stopped for morning tea at Staglands, a camping site in the heart of the valley. At Waikanae we visited my cousin Alex Gardyne in his cottage in Parklands village. The cottages there are very neat and functional and preserve a high degree of privacy. They get the benefit of a considerable range of services that are of great service to older folk - maintenance, insurance, lawn cutting and so on.

On Christmas Day we attended the morning service at the Wellington Anglican Cathedral of St Paul. This was very impressive and yet very friendly and we greatly enjoyed it. After the service we headed out to Vaughan Richardson's at Karori where he traditionally cooks a special brunch for one and all. He and Neela are very friendly and relaxed. Later at home we opened Christmas parcels with Susan and Roger, Vasanthe and her children and Jane and Gerry Zuccollo with James and Edward. We were a jolly party.

After Boxing Day we headed north to our first stop at the Mt Bruce Bird Sanctuary in North Wairarapa. Outstanding work is done here on the edge of a preserved area of native bush to ensure the survival of native birds. The main feature is the preservation of a flock of Kaka and a lovely feature is the feeding of these birds in the mid afternoon. They also have a pair of Notornis and many other smaller varieties of birds. Leaving there we passed through Eketahuna and Pahiatua, where we turned west over the Pahiatua Track, a winding road to Palmerston North which climbs over the northern end of the Tararua range and gives amazing views. Passing through Palmerston North we joined SH1 at Bulls and followed it to Taihape.

We had a neat little motel in Taihape and next morning embarked on the Gentle Annie road for Napier. This road seemed cross the roof of the North Island with views for many miles in most directions. I think the general altitude across this plateau must have been over 600m - one of the hills by the road was marked in the map at 1400 metres. To the north the triple mountains of Ruapehu, Tongariro, and Ngaruahoe peeped up above the distant horizon. The road was only mostly sealed and dropped from time to time down into wide valleys in which rivers were starting their journey to the sea many miles away. At one point we saw two big tractors each pulling seven-furrow ploughs through an enormous paddock. I could not help contrasting the amount of ground that could be ploughed in

this way to what could be covered in a day with horses when I was a boy. The Gentle Annie hill brought us rapidly down from the plateau into a valley. There was once a hotel here for travellers' overnight accommodation as it would have been a two-day journey by coach. I think Elizabeth was a little apprehensive about this road but she agreed to do it and our trip was quite incident free. We dropped further down to the flatter land of Hawkes Bay as we neared the city of Napier.

We spent three nights there, staying at the Anchorage Hotel virtually on the seafront on the east side of Napier Hill. One night we were disturbed about 3 am by the fire alarm and had to vacate our rooms and assemble in the forecourt. Fire engines came and firemen searched everywhere but could not find a fire. Eventually they found the broken glass of a fire alarm which had been maliciously set off. We were allowed to go back to bed and were glad to do so. Although it was a mild night, it had become quite chilly standing around doing nothing. I had managed to grab my dressing gown which was some help even though it was only made of a light material. We joined an Art Deco walk around the city which had been rebuilt following the 1931 earthquake. We found that Napier is architecturally unique in world terms due to the fact that the whole of the business area had been rebuilt in the then-current Art Deco style. The absence of any older buildings gave graphic credence to the destruction which had occurred. The damage from the earthquake caused fires in the business district and there was no water to fight the fires as all the water mains had been shattered. The residential sections of the city had suffered relatively little damage by comparison.

In Napier we also visited Alan and Joanna Dunn. Alan had worked with me in Invercargill in the 1950s and I had secretly thought he and I could have taken over the Gore section of Mallochs at some stage. However, he felt called to the Presbyterian ministry where he served for the rest of his working life. We also called on Len Gerken and his wife out at Taradale before heading north to Gisborne to spend some days with Ron and Lesley.

We arrived on New Year's Eve and we enjoyed a Festival of Light and Fire on the river with floating decorated lanterns and illuminated boats followed by a fabulous fireworks display. It was a lovely still evening and the show was great. The following days were spent on the beach, mini-golf challenges between Grandad and the girls and generally sharing in the summer life of the family. Lesley's brother Chris and Lucy and their children were about and added to the fun. It was pohutukawa time and the trees were in magnificent full bloom. We joined the family in the service at Holy Trinity Anglican Church on the first Sunday of the New Year and Elizabeth met Lesley's mother Val Hawkins at Sunday lunch.

At the beginning of the next week we headed north up the East Coast. We passed through Tolaga Bay with its long but now disused wharf and Tokomaru Bay with the crumbling freezing works building beside another dilapidated jetty and on through Ruatoria to Hicks Bay where we booked into the motel for the night. The following day we rounded the Cape and headed westwards into the Bay of Plenty. For much of this journey we passed through extensive stands of Manuka and saw many clusters of beehives collecting the manuka honey which is known to have healing properties.

In Tauranga we stayed with Bruce and Johanna Elder and made contact with Roger's mother Val Jones, Elizabeth's cousin Sheila and her husband Alan Freer, Jim Gardyne at Althorpe village and Joyce and Jack Ingram at Welcome Bay. One interesting afternoon we spent having a picnic on the foreshore at Mt Maunganui watching a very large cruise ship called Legend of the Seas glide so effortlessly out of the harbour on its way to Auckland. On our own way there we stayed with Elizabeth's cousin Lynne Robertson and her husband in Paeroa where Lee was the Baptist minister. As we passed through Waihi we looked down into the huge hole on the edge of the commercial centre where the search for gold has been going on for many years. A strong rainy wind blew up that was too much for the umbrella which turned inside out.

A major reason for our visit to Auckland was to stay with Elizabeth's Uncle Wally and Aunt Rose. They were very special to Elizabeth. They gave her a very warm welcome and that was extended to me also. They lived in Papatoetoe in South Auckland in a house they had occupied for many years. Wally is a handyman and had adapted many features around the home. They have three daughters, Lynne whom we had visited in Paeroa, Lesley who lived in Mahia Bay near Papatoetoe and Catherine who was in Morrinsville. Elizabeth had grown up with these cousins in England so there was a very strong bond. During our time in Auckland we visited Lesley and Colin Rothery at Mahia Bay, my nephew Trevor Pearce and Trish at Mangere Bridge, Carolyn Burns who was an Elder family friend, Pat and Phil Fougere who were longtime friends of mine, my cousin Sylvia and Rev Dallas Clark at Orewa and Alison Paterson who used to live in the house in front of us at Kelvin Heights.

We then headed south to Morrinsville to call on Cathy and Eric, taking with us Auntie Lily who was on a visit from England to the family in NZ. On our way we were directed onto a detour near Maramarua - the next day the newspaper told of a cooking oil spill from a tanker which had been nudged from behind by another vehicle. The driver had carried on unaware that a damaged outlet pipe was leaking oil onto the road, until a ute driver was able to pass him and signal him to stop. The oil on the road had to be covered with several truck-loads of sand before the road was safe to use. After delivering Auntie Lily to Cathy, we went on to Pam and Pete Vester in Hamilton. Elizabeth soon developed a strong rapport with Pam - she was familiar with Pam's sister Audrey O'Hagan in Kaiwera and there was a strong family likeness.

On our way south to Wanganui we stopped at the Raurimu Spiral. At this point the North Island main trunk railway has to negotiate a 140m drop down from the central volcanic plateau. The sharp descent was too steep for train traffic so the engineers designed a spiral system. The track turns a full circle and passes over itself through a couple of tunnels and a 180° loop turn while it gradually loses the necessary altitude. We were studying a tableau model of the spiral set up by the Rotary Club of Raetihi when suddenly the Wellington-Auckland express appeared on the rim of the plateau. We watched it taking the incline of the track through the bush and then reappearing after circling through the tunnels. What exquisite timing! During the Desert Road traverse we had glorious views of the volcanic Mount Ruapehu. Along the very winding but incredibly beautiful route down the Parapara route from Raetihi to Wanganui we experienced gloriously rugged bush scenery with here

a waterfall and there a bush-clad valley view.

We had a lovely two nights with George and Sheena Marshall - Ian and Phyllis Gardinaer's daughter. One evening George and I enjoyed a round of golf on the very pleasant Marton course. When we got home we found that Sheena and Elizabeth were having a lovely evening sharing their music - both were involved with primary school music. They gave the appearance of already being firm friends. We spent time with them in Wanganui at George's old school Wanganui Collegiate and in the Botanic Gardens. One morning George wanted to shift some cattle across the road to another part of the farm and recruited our assistance. Elizabeth was posted to stop the traffic and said she felt a sense of 'power' in holding up a very big Mack truck and trailer unit.

We carried on to Wellington following the old main road from Paekakariki and from which we gained magnificent views across the sea to Kapiti Island. We called on Jane and Gerry Zuccollo and had a nice tour of Jane's garden on our way to the Hutt motorway which took us into Wellington. We left Wellington on 18h of January and made our way back home.

We had enjoyed a wonderful trip through some very lovely and interesting country . We had introduced each other to a wide selection of relations and friends along the way. I had loved seeing Elizabeth on the couch in Gisborne with Jamie and Hannah on either side enjoying her company. And I had been very appreciative of the way her cousins and wider family had received me into their circle. I was to develop a very close relationship with Rose and Wally which has endured.

It was good to be home, to catch up with things and to continue developing our new life together.

An Eventful Year 2003

There were a couple of phone messages from the Gore Womens Refuge waiting for us when we arrived home from the North Island. After my garage sale I had offered the last remnants to the refuge and they were calling to make arrangements to collect them. week I found myself roster to cut the church lawns - Elizabeth was busy in the garden. Club activities were in abeyance for the summer.

In February the regular round of activities resumed. We took a trip to tour some Southland gardens in the Tokanui - Waikawa district. The tour included lunch at the Niagara Cafe which we found very tasty and attractive. Some of the gardens remain in my mind. The next week I had three funerals on successive days. The first was Stuart Copland from Waimumu who was the father of Brian, Geoff and Winston of Baptist Church days. Next was Les Waldie, a man in his late nineties who had been conductor of the Senior Citizens choir in earlier years. That was followed by the funeral of Buzz Lindsay in Invercargill. The Lindsays had operated a B&B business at Frankton and had been involved in the Frankton Church and the Travel Club. The Lindsays were a very well known Western Southland family and it was a large funeral. That week was very hot and Elizabeth recorded afternoon temperatures in the high 20s and up to 30C. In the middle of the week we were called on to baby-sit at the farm and Elizabeth had a Session meeting at the same time - I was left on guard after the children were safely in bed. On the Saturday night we had David and Greta Stark and Kath and Stewart Hall for dinner. The wives were very good Pukerau friends of Elizabeth's and I had known both husbands for many years. The Senior Citizens Southland picnic was hosted by the Winton Club - I was involved on behalf of the Gore Club of which I was still President. Elizabeth went to CWI where the themes were Doll Making and Kids Sayings. The Senior Citizens choir entertained at Windsor Park Rest Home and on a Saturday we went to watch Sam playing cricked at Hamillton Park with his team. The following Monday saw us at the Boys and Girls Agricultural Clubs exhibition of work at the Gore Showgrounds

where we enjoyed a picnic lunch between activities. The farm children had entries in the decorated saucers. It was another very warm week with temperatures in the high 20s and low 30s centigrade. This was a fair sample of the various activities with which we were involved from week to week.

It was a sad day when we farewelled my long-time friend Ian Gardiner at Frankton Church. However, who could refuse him the privilege of entering into his rest? I had been asked to pay the tribute as I had done for Phyllis and it was a pleasant and easy task to speak well of that man. Nevertheless I had a very real sense of loss that he was no longer there in the Wakatipu Home for me to visit. Our friendship had lasted through many years and Phyllis had been a very good friend to Millie, particularly in her early days in New Zealand. Ian and I had first developed a friendship when I started work in the Rialto office in 1935 with a hiatus when I moved to Wellington and did not come back to Gore until 1946.

The next day we attended the funeral of our immediate neighbour Hugh Herron. A few weeks earlier he and his wife had been involved in a head-on crash with another car which was on the wrong side of the road just north of Woodlands. His wife had been killed at the time and he had lingered in hospital with severe injuries. They placed a great deal of stress on vegetables and we had watched on with some surprise as they removed rose bushes and turned the flower beds into vegetable patches. Hugh spent most of his time in the garden and they had been pleasant neighbours. Kaiwera School held a Reunion and Elizabeth took along Paula Dickie who had written the history of the Pukerau and Kaiwera districts. Elizabeth had been taking music at the school for a number of years. At the weekend we visited my long-time friends Bruce and Evelyn Wilson and Lewis and Nellie Mackay. This was part of our programme of each meeting the friends of the other. Bruce and I had competed with each other in the races at the Knapdale Sunday School when we were boys and he and Lewis were clients. Evelyn and Nellie were sisters.

We had a short weekend in Queenstown where we stayed at the McPhail's crib adjacent to the Camping Ground. I joined the Queenstown Golf Club for a game and Elizabeth visited her niece Jenny and husband Geoff. We had dinner with Graeme and Shirley Botting. While visiting Arrowtown for lunch on the Sunday we found Liz and Howard McGrouther in a cafe and joined them. A few days later we had a visit to Dunedin where I had a bladder check at Mercy with a very satisfactory result. Life continued: Nicola called for lunch, the Diamond Wedding of Ossie and Nell Dey, lunch at the farm, dinner at Baker's before they moved to Wanaka, a pacemaker check at Invercargill, Music Federation concert, dinner at The Gables.

On the 8th of May we left for Mosgiel where we were to leave our car with Ewen and Isla McPhail while we went on a trip to America and England.

We flew out from Auckland in the evening with Wally and Rose there to see us through check-in. Our first stop was at Los Angeles where we did not do much sightseeing but made good use of the hotel swimming pool. Our flight next day was to Charlotte in North Carolina where we were to connect with a short flight to Greensboro. It was extremely hot

and the air conditioning in our plane was found to be faulty - the aircraft was towed away for servicing. Long distance passengers like us who were bound for Greensboro were taken overland in a fleet of Ford Transit Mini-vans. Of course this was much slower than flying but did give us a much more interesting view of the countryside of North Carolina. With all of the delays we were running four or five hours late. We had no way to contact our friends but they had come to the airport and had gathered that there was a delay. However, they had not been advised what was happening to the passengers. When we eventually arrived we found a very confused Al Rosenblutt who had been waiting all that time. We were all greatly relieved to meet at long last and Al and Sonia whisked us off to their home at High Point nearby. Al and Sonia were a couple who had met Elizabeth and Jim on their visits to America and they had developed a close friendship. They made us very welcome and we were glad to get to bed after such a wearying day.

As their name may suggest the Rosenblutts are of Jewish origin but they did not seem to be practising the Jewish faith. However Sonia took us to the Jewish synagogue which proved to be very interesting. High Point is a smaller town by US standards and is known for its furniture. Twice a year they hold a furniture convention when the new season's styles are displayed and retailers place their orders. Al and Sonia were rather sad that factories were closing down because of competition from imported Chinese furniture. This was interesting to me as at a Rotary meeting shortly before leaving I had asked the financial controller of the fibreboard factory at Matura where they sold the bulk of their output. He said it had been about 75% to the United States until recently when the sales had shifted to about the same percentage going to China. We were witnessing the effect of the undercutting of the US manufacturers by China with that country's lower labour cost and using the product of a New Zealand factory. We had about three days with Al and Sonia and they showed us round the town. They took us to a Farmers Market where I spotted some kiwifruit grown in Chile, packed in California and now being sold in North Carolina. They were priced at US\$1 each and were nowhere near as good as our fruit. We also went to Replacements Ltd which specialises in replacement items for china tea-sets, crystalware, cutlery and silver tea and coffee services. Elizabeth wondered if she could buy couple of replacements for a tea-set which had suffered breakages. They brought up on their computer some images of the various "Rose" patterns by the makers of her tea-set and she identified her pattern. It took only a couple of minutes for them to produce the items and she arranged for them to be posted home. The warehouse covers at least the area of a couple of rugby football fields and is filled with closely packed floor-to-ceiling double-sided shelving which must store millions of items. They refurbish silver tea services, cutlery and other silver items and have on show some fabulous decorative pieces priced in the tens of thousands of dollars. I understand that Melissa has since increased that tea-set to half a dozen places from the same source. Replacements Ltd buy their stock at clearing sales of deceased estates and end-of-run items when manufacturers switch to another pattern.

At the end of our stay with the Rosenblutts we flew on to Philadelphia to spend time with David and Peggy. We slept in the TV room on the sofa-bed which was fairly conveniently situated on the first floor and with the bathroom right next door. The big event we had come for was Kate's graduation from Tufts College in Boston - or Commencement as

the Americans call it. Kate had done very well. There is a competition each year for the right to give the students' valedictory speech. Kate had been runner up but she did not appear over sad at missing out as she realised it would have been a tough assignment.

We travelled up to Boston in a convoy of two. David had hired a four-wheel drive Chevrolet four-seater with considerable space at the back. Kate was finishing at College and all of her three-year accumulation of goods had to be brought home. Peggy had the task of driving this van-type vehicle for the whole of the seven-hour trip. David was in his Ford stationwagon with both of us and Ken and we had a very comfortable ride. We found the route interesting it passed within sight of the New York skyscraper skyline. We followed the Merritt Highway through Connecticut along the route Millie and I had taken some years previously and eventually made Boston, pretty tired but glad to have arrived. David had booked rooms in the Hilton Hotel and we were very comfortably settled. Peggy's mother Ruth had come up with her son Tom and his family and we had a dinner party of about a dozen at a restaurant near Tufts. David drove round the square twice before finding the right lane for the turn-off to the cafe. We unloaded outside the restaurant and handed over the car to a parking attendant - when we left to come home it was delivered back to the door.

The meal was a very happy one but it was a very sudden introduction for Elizabeth to all these new family members. However, she was a very mature person and rose to the occasion very well indeed - she made a very good impression on the family. The party consisted of David and Peggy, Kate, Ken, Elizabeth and me, Ruth, Tom and his wife Ci, Tom's daughter Jenny and son Ben and Ezra who was a friend of Kate's who had come all the way from Moscow to be present for the occasion - he was a journalist.

The next morning we parked near Kate's flat and then walked to the College Campus where there was an ecumenical service in a large marquee erected for the purpose. We met some of Kate's tutors and the Chancellor of the College with whom Kate was on very friendly terms. Around midday we adjourned to the graduation area where several thousand chairs had been arranged outdoors facing a stage. There was an enclosed area for about 1200 graduands. There were two announcers who alternated in calling up the candidates who crossed the stage to receive their diplomas and then descended at the far side. The graduation address was given by a South African woman who had graduated from Tufts. She had stayed in USA where she had become a member of the State legislature and was now Attorney General in the State government. - she was a very capable speaker. Ezra had gone earlier to book seats for us but unfortunately they were on the far side of an access way. People came to stand in this open space and blocked our view. Peggy tried to move them on and I helped but it became a hopeless task - there were just too many people. However, as students completed their graduation their friends left to join them and by the time Kate was called we got a very good view.

We stayed that night in Boston and next morning loaded up our wagons to "the gunwales" and set off for Philadelphia. Elizabeth and I were in the back seat with stuff all round us and hardly able to move. David and Peggy were in the front with somewhat more

space. The Ford had been left for Kate and Ezra to load up the rest of her stuff and follow after us. It was too late to make Phila that night so we called at Newport, RI and found an hotel overlooking the harbour. Newport had been the venue for the America's Cup match where Allan Bond finally broke the US hold on the Cup. We toured the resort and saw the many mansions of the rich who had their second homes there for the summer months. No doubt some were permanent but they were very substantial homes indeed. We dined at the hotel and the lights were turned down to such a romantic dimness that I had difficulty seeing my food - we requested some candles for our table. In the morning I paid for our room although I am sure David was expecting to foot the bill.

On the way home next day we detoured to the small town of Hyde Park where Franklin D Roosevelt and his wife Eleanor had lived on a lovely site overlooking the Hudson River. The view across the river from the elevated site was very spectacular. The house is now the Roosevelt Museum and houses many mementoes of his leadership during WW2. For someone who had been through the war, it was very nostalgic and brought back many memories of those days. It was a tragedy that FDR died just a month or so before victory was declared in Europe and there was firm prospect of victory against the Japanese. Franklin and Eleanor are both buried in a garden square on the site.

We were glad to be back in Philadelphia. Kate arrived the next day. We did some sightseeing in Philadelphia and visited Ruth during the next few days before we were to set off for England. Our flight went directly from Philadelphia to Heathrow where we were met by Melissa and Jono. They took us initially to their flat which they shared with another couple and where they had vacated their bedroom for the 'oldies.'

It happened to be Melissa's 30th birthday and she had arranged a special tea for us and two or three of her friends at Fortnum and Mason's. This was rather special. F&M is a high-class department store and these High Teas are a feature offering in their beautifully furnished tearooms. We sat at a round table with a spotlessly starched table cloth, fine china and silver cutlery. The cakes were served on silver three-tier cake stands. Tea was served from a silver tea service and all was most elegant and attractive. A pianist played softly nearby and the atmosphere was quite special. I think I felt this was a very special privilege for a simple chap from far away New Zealand.

We went down to Winchester where I met my new parents-in-law John and Winifred Denford. They lived in a two-storied house in a Close established some thirty years or so before which they had occupied from new. It had been intended to be their retirement home but John continued to commute to London for a time after they moved in. John had spent forty-four years working in the London Transport tube and bus network and had been retired for about twenty-five years. He had joined their inflation-adjusted pension scheme and had been enjoying the fruits of his long service for many years - and was still counting. I remarked on this one day and suggested he might not be very popular with the trustees of the pension scheme. He was of a fairly serious mien but I drew a smile from him. He had fairly recently had a slight stroke from which he had made a good recovery but it had left him a bit morose and impatient. I gathered that he had been a very disciplined

man all his life and had risen to quite a senior position with London Transport - I think he had been Chief Accountant.

They were both delighted to see their daughter again and we fitted quite well into the home. Winifred, or Win as she is commonly called, was lovely and very welcoming. We stayed with them a couple of weeks or more and I spent some time working in the garden where things had got a bit out of control. Win enjoyed her garden but it had got past her. She had a gardener who came in one morning a week to cut the grass and the hedges. He controlled the growth to a large extent but his hours were not sufficient to keep things spick and span. John and Win had a very good friend who had lived opposite for many years. David Ball and John had a pattern of spending up to three hours together twice a week - at David's on a Monday morning and at John's on Fridays. David had fairly recently lost his wife and as a city councillor had taken his customary year as Mayor. Both had an intimate knowledge of Winchester. They both had a business background and they generally put the world to rights twice a week over a bottle of wine. It was coming up to Win's ninety-fifth birthday - John was a couple of years or so younger. The whole family gathered at the Horse and Cart nearby for a celebration dinner - this allowed me to meet them for the first time. There was her other daughter Joyce and her husband David, their son Simon with Janey, daughters Clare with Jeb and Louise with Jeff, and grandsons Fergus and Archie. David Ball was also there. Everyone was delighted to have Elizabeth to share in this birthday. She had come back five years previously for Win's ninetieth and Win had said then that she expected to see them all in ten years time!

Mel and Jono had bought a second-hand car for their time in England and they loaned it to us for about two weeks. Under their insurance drivers over eighty were excluded so Elizabeth had to do all the driving. During that time we visited Alan and Janet Cook an hour or so north of Winchester in Thame - Janet had been a close friend of Elizabeth's. Their house backed on to open fields and which gave them an attractive setting. We headed west into Gloucestershire and had a couple of nights with David and Jean Bruce-Gardyne. I directed Elizabeth down from the main road to this secret village along roads that got narrower and narrower. I had approached from an unfamiliar direction and I could not immediately find the house. We phoned and David came and directed us to their home. Although we are not related I find them very friendly and I think they are pleased to have associations with so many Gardynes in New Zealand. They are very family conscious and have compiled very extensive family trees. This seems a bit pointless in a way as they are all single and there is no family to follow after them. We went north to Herefordshire and the village of Eywas Harold to meet up with the travelling companion with whom Elizabeth had come to New Zealand in 1964 on a working holiday. Betty is happily living in this also isolated village with her second husband Leslie. We were housed in a self-service flat over their garage but had main meals with them in the house. The visit was a delight for Elizabeth. The weather was lovely and we dined outdoors in the very long evenings, looking out over the village to the green hills beyond. They have a very attractive property but it is fairly large and involves a lot of effort to keep it up. They took us out to visit an old ruined castle and see something of the attractive West Country.

We headed north from there through Worcestershire and the borders of Wales to The Wirral which is the peninsula between the Mersey River mouth at Liverpool and the Dee River flowing out from Wales. We found West Kirby and the home of John and Barbara Martin who had neighbours of Elizabeth's in Reading when she was teaching there before her venture to New Zealand. They had a young family then and Elizabeth used to baby-sit for them on occasions. John led us upstairs to the first floor of their multi-storey house and then to the second floor and finally to the top level. We could see the reason why - the upper bedroom had a large window looking out over the wide Dee estuary and across to the Welsh shore. The estuary is a wide expanse of sand at low tide but fills from bank to bank at full tide. I recall that John brought us tea and coffee in the morning when the sun was lighting up the estuary. They were delightful hosts and they received me warmly as a friend because I was with Elizabeth.

One day they took us on an expedition along the Welsh coast and then inland to the Bodnant Gardens. I was glad to see them. My old friend Ian Gardiner had been a nurseryman. 'If you ever get a chance, don't miss the Bodnant Gardens,' he had said to me many years before. Here, quite unexpectedly, was my chance. The gardens were at least a century old and were nicely furnished with fully-grown English trees. Many were planted in a valley and had more than a hundred feet to grow in the shelter of the valley being also protected by more large trees on the rise above. There were extensive lawns and shrubberies in the grounds of the attractive mansion surrounded by ornamental beds. We enjoyed just wandering round and viewing the many vistas through the trees and across the valley. It was a lovely day. Later we visited Conwy Castle in Conway. The unoccupied ruins were preserved well enough to show what it had once been. This was one of the castles built by King Edward to protect his acquisition of Wales. He had tricked the Welsh into accepting his overlordship by giving them a Prince of Wales who had never spoken a word of English. He produced the Baby Prince. A detail that intrigued me at the castle was the nest of a seagulls on the top of one of the towers. It was a very secure site but I could not help thinking of the first flight of the fledgling chicks - it would have been all or nothing for them. On our final morning John disappeared to his computer and produced a complete itinerary and map for our journey to Winchester. It was only good until we did a detour and changed our route as we went along - but it was a very helpful thought and would have been a great aid for someone who was not as familiar with England as we were.

We spent a few days in London. One Sunday morning the All Blacks were playing a test match in New Zealand and Mel and Jono took us across South London to a pub where they served breakfast and televised the game on a large screen for a crowd of mostly NZ supporters. I have forgotten the score and even who they were playing - but it was an interesting experience.

We travelled by train Winchester and then crossed by boat from Southampton to the Isle of Wight to visit Tony and Marion Maine. They had visited New Zealand and Elizabeth had invited me to make up a four with them at dinner one night. Their memories of me were fairly vague but again they welcomed us both very warmly. They took us on a motor tour around the island with a meal on the far south coast. We paid a visit to the ruins of a

Roman villa in the centre of the island. I had not been aware that the Romans had occupied the Isle of Wight but it is quite logical that they should have used it. They also took us to Osborne House which was the holiday residence of Queen Victoria where she virtually isolated herself after the death of her husband Prince Albert. The Prime Minister had to come to Osborne to see her on matters of State. We also managed to fit in a day visit to Ali Coles, daughter of Dot and Frank Elder. We had a lovely day with her and her sister Sally Turnbull and their husbands - it was warm and sunny and we spent the afternoon in the garden in the shade of trees and umbrellas.

Our time in England came to an end and we flew back to Philadelphia on our return journey to New Zealand. The family situation was a bit chaotic at the time and David did well to ensure that we had things to entertain us. We visited some of the museums and art galleries, did some shopping and one day David organised a picnic lunch for us with Peggy - it was a lovely day and the event went off quite pleasantly.

We flew on to Los Angeles where we lodged a request for seating upgrades using our Air-miles. We were asked to wait while other passengers boarded. We waited and waited until there were no passengers left in the departure lounge. Finally the call came that they did have business seats for us. However, when we reached the upper deck we found ourselves seated in different rows. A gentleman noticed this and offered to swap seats so that we could be together. We had a very pleasant trans-Pacific flight and were back home on the 24th of July.

We went out for a celebratory afternoon tea for our first wedding anniversary on the 17th of August and Dawn paid us a three-day visit at the end of the month. Otherwise the weeks went by with the usual round of events: planning for the 30th Anniversary of the Senior Citizens Club, bladder check at Mercy, the funeral of Alex Gow, estimates for sealing the drive but no decision, booked Bill Blythe to paint the house, Bruce Wilson's funeral on the 15th of October, the Hallam Smith Memorial Lecture, and so on through the weeks.

John and Barbara Martin arrived - we met them at Dunedin and brought them to Gore through the Catlins. We took them on a short visit to Wanaka, attending church there on the Sunday and returning to Gore through Queenstown. The next afternoon we headed to Te anau where we booked a motel for the night. In the morning we took a coach trip to Milford Sound, travelling through to Queenstown that night. We stayed in McPhail's holiday cottage and did the sights of the area ending up with dinner up the gondola ride at Skyllne restaurant. On the Thursday John and Barbara flew out of Queenstown and we returned to Gore.

A week later we were in Christchurch at the Tudor Court Motel to meet up with our next lot of English visitors, Betty and Leslie Gillions. They had been motoring in the North Island and had surrendered their car in Christchurch. On the way south we called on Robin Dillon of the family Betty had served near Balfour, then had three nights in McGrouter's cottage at Harington Point. We attended church at Knox Presbyterian in Dunedin where Susan was a minister and then visited the Yellow-Eyed Penguins at the beach at the back of

Howard McGrouther's farm. We went on Gore on the Monday and then were off to Te Anau and Milford and a repeat of the Queenstown visit, again staying at McPhails. We also fitted in a visit to Dillon's farm which was now owned and farmed by one of the children that Betty had helped to look after. She was very warmly received. We took them to Christchurch through the Lindis Pass and Lake Tekapo and saw them off to Auckland and Rarotonga.

So ended the visits of two special couples who were friends of Elizabeth from England days and we were almost relieved to return to normal. We went to Dunedin for the wedding of Ken and Heather's daughter Sarah Pearce and were home that night for Christmas music the next day at church. We had Christmas dinner at home with Dawn that year and then went up to Clyde on Boxing Day for two nights with the Young family. Robert and Stacey were camped at Clyde and we joined Nicola and Brian who were staying in a motel. We were home again by Sunday night. I have no record of how we spent New Years Eve.

So ended a very eventful year. We had enjoyed a visit to England and visits to the USA on the way there and coming home. We had hosted two couples visiting from England in quick succession. It had been a happy year.

Tragedy Strikes 2004

We went up to Wanaka for New Year with Malcolm and Catherine Baker in their cottage. I recall driving to a high point overlooking the town to watch the fireworks display at midnight - it was a very spectacular sight. On the 2nd of January we came home through Queenstown. At Arrowtown we called on Brian and Pauline Bayley. While Brian and I were talking, Elizabeth and Pauline discovered that the Bayley's son had flatted with Nicola while at University in Dunedin. The parents had never met but were familiar names to each other. In Queenstown we called on Graeme and Shirley Botting before we came on home to Gore.

We visited Dunedin for a day or two, staying with Nicola and Brian at Portobello. We spent some time in the Art Gallery and the next morning I had a round of golf at Chisholm Park leaving Elizabeth and Nicola together. On our way out of town we called on Vic and Win at Chatsford in Mosgiel. The next day there was a memorial service in the Catholic Church in Gore for Jean Smith. Her death marked another gap in the ranks of our early Gore friends. News also came through of the death of Mrs Childs, Dawn's friend Helen's mother. Her funeral was conducted by Susan at Port Chalmers Presbyterian Church and we went up in support of Helen. There was not a large attendance and Helen was grateful for the gesture we had made. I was impressed by the little stone church which is quite lovely. However it lies under the shadow of the hills above the town and must have been hard to heat during winter months.

The 4th of February was Paula Dickie's 70th birthday. Paula had few friends - she had outlived many of her late husband's generation and Elizabeth's generous nature led her to offer to host a birthday party for her. Unfortunately this clashed with the two days of the Masters Golf in Dunedin for which I had entered months before. Robert generously offered to help his mother with the catering and they produced a successful and happy celebration for Paula. I managed to win a gold medal for the best net in the 80+age group.

The John Deere Tractor Rally at the Gore Showgrounds was a major event. There was a display of John Deere tractors over the decades and I note that I did gate duty in the morning of the main day. The Waimumu Field Days followed some time later and I did Gate Duty again in the morning of the first day and the afternoon of the second day. The Field Days were getting larger each year.

The Southland-wide Senior Citizens annual picnic was held in Gore. A note in our diary in Elizabeth's hand said, 'Scones and pikelets by 10 00 am.' The Gore Club was hosting so the President's wife was playing her part.

The following week was the 30th anniversary of the Gore and Districts Senior Citizens Club. It was quite intriguing that I had instigated the founding of the club in 1974 as Mayor and here I was President of the club thirty years later for the anniversary. I wrote and had printed a short history of the club for the occasion. I asked Elizabeth and past President Doris Macgregor to cut the cake. Elizabeth found this a bit of an ordeal but managed it very well.

On the 25th of March we went to see Dr Peter Fettes who diagnosed the feelings of strain she had been experiencing as 'Depressive Tiredness.' We accepted the comment with a certain amount of puzzlement. In the meantime Elizabeth had a big evening a few days later when the Women's Choir provided entertainment at the Gore Womens Club. This was the culmination of a great deal of practice by the choir. Elizabeth prepared very specially for this, even to buying a new outfit from Classic Clothing in Main Street. It was quite expensive but she looked a million dollars in it. The performance went off very well and friends told me she conducted the evening beautifully.

We headed to Wanaka for two or three nights with Dawn and a couple of her friends who were there for the Easter weekend. I took the opportunity of calling on Hugh and Lorraine Walker who had retired up there. Hugh had been my deputy mayor. Hugh and I were reminiscing and Elizabeth and Lorraine were talking together. I did not notice that Elizabeth was finding it heavy going as she can usually hold her own very well, even with a stranger. Elizabeth commented on this afterwards but we did not give much importance to it at the time.

One evening Elizabeth was again feeling a bit mouldy and we called on the Urgent Doctor. Dr Sanson came up with the same diagnosis of Depressive Tiredness. We called Elizabeth's good friend Margaret Pullar who suggested Elizabeth go to Ashburn Hall in Dunedin for evaluation by Dr Stephanie du Fresne, the chief Psychiatrist there. Margaret worked very hard with the doctor to have Elizabeth admitted. Elizabeth was there only a few days and I was frantically commuting back and forth, staying some nights in Dunedin and getting things in order for the AGM of the Senior Citizens Club. One day we had an interview with Dr du Fresne. Nicola was also there. Elizabeth was very confused in her answers to some of the questions. She would start a reply and not complete it. I moved closer and took her hand as a measure of support but did not attempt to complete her sentences as I knew it was important for the doctor to hear her own responses. The doctor requested

an MRI scan before she embarked on any psychological treatment and we agreed at a cost of some \$400. I was not in Dunedin that day but Nicola and Robert and Stacey were there. I arrived back from Gore late in the afternoon to find her room empty so I went to the ward office. One of the nurses told me that the result of the scan was bad - Elizabeth had secondary lesions in the frontal lobe of the brain. They were secondaries from the breast cancer of nearly two years before. She had been moved with the family to a flat downstairs and I was directed there. I recall coming into the room and meeting Elizabeth's eyes and am still haunted by the memory. Instead of the usual bright smiling face, her eyes were dead with sadness. Quite apart from the impact upon herself I'm sure she was thinking that she had let me down. It was a very sad moment for all of us.

Nicola stayed the night in the flat and Robert and Stacey went off to a motel with the children. Eventually Elizabeth and I went to bed. We lay in each other's arms for a long time until Elizabeth finally drifted off to sleep in the wee small hours. About an hour later I eased myself out of bed, made a cup of tea and then slid back into bed and went to sleep myself.

The next day was Elizabeth's birthday. It was her 65th birthday which she had expected to relieve her financial situation with the entitlement to National Superannuation. The importance of this to her can be judged by the fact that she had prepared her application ready for registering some two months in advance. This enabled me to file the application when she was no longer capable of doing so and it was quickly approved.

I had planned a celebration of her birthday and had ordered a cake from a bakery in South Dunedin. The plan was to have a cake of the size that could be shared with the other patients in the ward. They had been very friendly and helpful to her in explaining the systems in place for meals and so on. There was a marked contrast in ages with most of the patients being relatively young. I collected the cake during the morning and called at a supermarket to buy candles. The celebration was held down in the flat and I asked Sam and Jamie and Libby to blow out the candles for her. We left by far the biggest share of the cake to be shared with the patients. Then it was a case of heading for home. I was able to bring the car round to the lower level and load up her bits and pieces with the help of Nicola and the rest of the family.

There was no hope held out for a recovery. Robert and Stacey pressed for Elizabeth to go for an Oncology assessment in the faint hope that some kind of treatment could be given. She was admitted to the Oncology Ward at Kew. The staff were very sympathetic and understanding and agreed to our taking her up to Dunedin for radiotherapy in the hope of reducing the lesion to some extent. We took a motel in Dunedin and the daily visits began. There was, sadly, no sign of any improvement.

Elizabeth's family in England had been advised of the diagnosis and they had great difficulty in grasping the seriousness of the situation. I phoned Joyce to ask if she could come urgently to be with Elizabeth and she agreed. But she had arrangements to make about her Riding Stables and was not able to get away immediately. I phoned her again, stressing the urgency of the situation and told her if she wanted to have any conversation

with Elizabeth she needed to drop everything and come straight away. Robert also phoned her to make the same point. All of this, of course, was tearing us apart as we tried to cope with all the care and messages, and callers - and our own emotions. I initiated an almost daily email to her parents' friend David Ball to keep them up to date with every step in the process. John and Win were devastated at the news and Win kept saying, 'It should be me. It should be me.'

By the time we were in Dunedin for radiotherapy Joyce had arrived and shared that time with us. Before going to Dunedin, I have a lovely picture in my mind of Joyce and Elizabeth walking round the garden arm in arm. There were some lovely plants and flowers for them to enjoy and I think that Elizabeth was still able to talk about them. That was as much as she could manage by that time. In the motel, Joyce slept in a day bed in the lounge which Elizabeth would take over during the day. Joyce found it very hard indeed to comprehend what was happening and that is indeed what we all were feeling. After a few days there was no indication of even slight benefit from the radiotherapy and we went back to Kew. We were soon transferred to Gore Hospital where we were allocated the family room which had been added as an extra when the hospital was built. It had a large room for the patient with a couch-bed for a family member to stay over. It had its own bathroom and kitchen. There was also a lounge which was used sometimes for meetings but was mostly free for our use. We did use it occasionally but spent most of our time with Elizabeth.

Very soon after the full diagnosis Elizabeth lost the power to express herself and lay with her eyes closed. Once she opened them with great difficulty on request so we initiated a twenty-four hour family vigil because she could not call for help if she was left unattended. I was quite sure that she could understand all that was said to her. In the ambulance coming back from Invercargill to Gore she had stirred a little as she sensed the vehicle slowing down. I told her we were entering Mataura and she settled again for the remainder of the trip. She was obviously aware of things happening around her.

During this time we were the recipients of incredible kindness and expressions of love and concern. When we were in Dunedin, Susan and Roger brought complete dinners to us at the motel. Back home in Gore, Marion and Tom Falconer regularly brought dinners to 7 Devon Street, often to a rather full gathering of the family. We received so many cakes and casseroles and soups that we didn't have to think about preparing food. Again, this spoke to me of how much Elizabeth was loved by her family and friends who were staggered that this was happening to such a vigorous and apparently healthy woman. During the previous two months, Elizabeth's garden had been sadly neglected as other matters were naturally given priority. Arne and Jenny Cleland of Pukerau Nurseries were very good friends of Elizabeth's and Arne volunteered to send in a team of gardeners to weed and tidy up the garden. Arne gave this as a gift and refused to render an account. It was certainly lovely to have this clean-up as family and friends came to express their sympathy or bring yet another gift of food.

Uncle Wally and Aunt Rose flew all the way to see her, together with their daughters Lynne and Lesley and niece Sheila. Their visit had been delayed by an accident involving

Sheila and her husband. Lesley and Lynne were very keen to take the overnight vigil on the night they were in town, a little to my regret as Elizabeth was getting very low. In fact that was to be her last complete night as the next evening we sadly watched her breath becoming more and more shallow until she died just before midnight.

So the battle had been lost. Those days were very trying indeed as we watched this vibrant woman being struck down by an inexorable enemy. We had been emailing the daily progress to her family in England which sadly had contained no encouragement or hope. Now we had to pass on the final news. I felt so sad for this elderly couple so far away, receiving this very sad news of their lovely daughter's death. I was also very sad for myself. We had melded so easily together and our life had been very happy.

From the start of Elizabeth's illness Nicola spent much time with her, being treated very generously by her employers. Melissa also came down for weekends and towards the close was granted compassionate leave from her school. Robert and Stacey were also very assiduous in their support. The family treated me as a real family member even though my time with Elizabeth had been so short compared with those who had spent all their lives with her. I was very conscious of this and grateful. There was no doubt in their minds that Elizabeth and I had spent a very happy time together and they were glad their mother had experienced this time with me.

There was nothing more we could do. We said our sad farewells as we scattered to our homes for the night. Wally and Rose and the girls were advised and they decided they would not stay for the funeral. The purpose of their visit had been to see Elizabeth and this had been fulfilled. To delay their flights for several days would have been difficult. I was very impressed with the deep bond between Elizabeth and her Aunt and Uncle and with her cousins.

The funeral directors had been notified and Elizabeth was taken into their care. Graham and Heather Stephen were friends of mine - Heather as a member of the Evans family we had known at Georgetown Baptist Church in Invercargill and Graham as a member of my Rotary Club. It was agreed that as the first notice of her death would only appear on Monday it would be wise to delay the funeral till Wednesday afternoon. Then we met with Karima Fai'ai and David Anderson. It was agreed that both ministers would share the service. Elizabeth had moved into Gore but had served for some years as an Elder of the Pukerau Parish and she had supported David very much in his efforts to widen the church's influence in the district.

We had arranged for Elizabeth to be brought home on the Tuesday and she lay in the lounge that day and overnight before being taken direct to the church about midday on Wednesday. It was lovely but very poignant to see the grandchildren going into the lounge and paying homage in their simple way to their beloved Gran. At the church it was very moving to see the church filling up to overflow point and to greet people who had loved and admired her so much. It was somewhat overwhelming to see the number of Elizabeth's and my friends who came to pay their tribute. The Remembrance Book recorded no fewer

than 425 names - a wonderful tribute to this very special lady who had come as an outsider to the Pukerau and Gore Districts and had made herself respected and loved by so many people in the area. I was personally very touched by the number of my nieces and nephews who gave up their time to attend.

We tried to arrange the tributes to cover the various activities Elizabeth had been involved with and to close with the personal perspective from the family. I chose to speak also. This marriage seemed to have been so much to my benefit that I wanted to convey the fact that it was a real bonding of our lives and had been a marriage born out of mutual love. The real loss for me was not the loss of a companion and housekeeper but of one with whom I had developed a very deep bond.

We had close friends Margaret Pullar and Marion Falconer bringing the readings and Daphne Dixey spoke of her contribution to Country Womens Institute. Kath Hall spoke about her choral work with the Institute choir and the success it had achieved in competition and her later work with the Gore Womens Club Choir. It was a privilege to have Elizabeth's sister Joyce there to give some background on Elizabeth's early life in England and to represent her family, especially the elderly parents who were so devastated by this loss.

Nicola and Melissa spoke about their special relationship with their mother and the lengths to which she had gone to help them fulfil their ambitions. One example - 'once we got her to learn how to back the horse float at our pony club meets she was just OK!' Stacey brought the 'in-law' point of view and paid tribute to a special mother-in-law who had assisted with the home birth of her granddaughter - she had been a very close friend and strength through all kinds of situations and a great adviser always on hand.

I was pretty devastated with the turn of events. Had not God indicated that it was right for me to enter into this union in spite of the difference in our ages? And yet here it had all come to such a sudden end. A number of times during my life I had been in situations of extreme illness or with the possibility of real danger and I felt that God had brought me through for some purpose. I was prepared to accept this although the sequence of events seemed strange and unexplained at that time. In the light of this it was difficult to speak of that stage where love seemed to intrude itself between us. I also wanted to add my tribute to this wonderful person with whom I had been privileged to share my life. It was great to be able to challenge the congregation to give hearty voice in the closing hymn which was associated with her links with CWI with England and with her strong voice which she used so freely and which I recalled from that night we had shared at the Last of the Proms three years before.

There was a moving incident for me immediately after the funeral back at the house. Quite in the middle of the general conversation Melissa remarked that someone had sympathised with her and Nicola and Robert on the fact that they had lost both their parents while they were so young. 'This had not occurred to me,' she said, 'as we still have Ivan.' How lovely.

Life Continues

I had not thought ahead to what would happen after the funeral. Robert had been spending a lot of time off the farm. Nicola had taken a lot of time off work during her mother's illness and Melissa had also had time off from her school. Dawn had been down at the weekend and had stayed on for the funeral. Susan had been coming and going. Everyone needed to get back to normal life as quickly as possible. In the end only Ron was left. He had arrived on the morning of the funeral and had booked to fly back to Gisborne on the following Monday morning. His presence was a real blessing in those early days.

I had gone to see Neil Pritchard with the family to put in train the initial administration of the estate as I had some information from her papers at home. I was able to assist at this point in establishing her assets but that was the only time I was involved - from that point on it was a family affair. I was gob-smacked at one stage when the girls said that Elizabeth had asked that her car should go to me. This was contrary to our Matrimonial Agreement which specified that each would retain ownership of the assets they had brought into the marriage. It was also contrary to the terms of her will. The thought left me speechless and very appreciative.

I was well aware in the back of my mind that I no longer had a home. Our decision for me to live with Elizabeth had backfired. My home had been sold and Elizabeth had pre-deceased me contrary to our expectations. Elizabeth's property at No 7 was too large for me to consider buying it from the estate - I would have been a slave to the garden. While I had been doing a lot of the routine work it would have been quite a different proposition to handle it on my own and manage the house as well. However, in our memo to our families two years before, Elizabeth had requested that in the event of this situation arising I should be given a reasonable time to find a new home. The house property had been bequeathed to the girls who were very quick to reassure me on this point.

My immediate task was to acknowledge the numerous cards of sympathy which had flooded in and I concentrated my energies on that for the moment. It was a considerable job but we had an acknowledgement card printed at Necklins and each member of the family used that to acknowledge messages on a personal basis.

Elizabeth's car did not have air conditioning and I started to make enquiries about the possibility of getting it installed. Her car was a slightly superior model to mine with a lower mileage and I preferred to retain it. However, I was still planning to drive up north to family and friends in the summer months and I knew the value of air conditioning. Finally I contacted an expert in Christchurch who advised it was not possible - the car had been NZ assembled and there was no provision for adding an air-con unit. I therefore reluctantly decided to sell her car and retain my own. I advertised it for sale 'as is where is,' not knowing that it had once had a minor crash at home. I gathered much later that it was sold on without this advice and the sale was repudiated. By this time, of course, it was no concern of mine.

The first Sunday back at church would have been a much greater ordeal if Ron had not been there to accompany me. It was made all the more startling while the band was singing the prelude songs prior to the service. They performed a song with these words repeated in the chorus: 'And God will bless you, and guide you.' Immediately my lack of a home sprang to mind and I thought, 'God has got the problem of a future home in hand already.'

As time went on, I began to see some explanation for my questions about why God had given his seal to our marriage only to have it end so abruptly. In the early stages of her illness Elizabeth had been unable to get about on her own and could have been in real danger without my help. Perhaps this was part of God's provision for her. During this time I had a stream of visitors who came to extend their sympathy in my loss and their thoughtfulness was much appreciated.

I was gradually resuming my normal activities as I felt strongly that life had still to be lived and that it would not be good for me to withdraw into seclusion. I took Ron to Dunedin for an early flight on the Monday morning and went on for a night or two with Susan and Roger. On the spur of the moment Susan invited some of my nieces and nephews to come round for the evening and I found this time most enjoyable. The following week Catherine and Malcolm Baker invited me to Wanaka for three nights and on the way I visited George and Hazel Elder and Helen Child's father in Alexandra - Ross Childs had lost his wife shortly before and Helen was a bit worried about him.

On the 6th of July I flew to Gisborne for about two weeks. At this time I still had not solved my house problem. While in Gisborne I made some enquiries about the possibility of settling there. That was the location of my most stable family members and my only New Zealand grandchildren. In considering my future in sheltered accommodation, I have come to the conclusion that family are likely to be the most reliable visitors of a parent in a rest home. However, my enquiries did not show up any immediate possibilities in the way

of town houses and in addition I did not have any conviction that this would be the right move to make at that time. I returned to Gore on the 20th of July.

Earlier in the year Richard Bishop had approached me on behalf of the Golf Club Committee to write up the history of the Club for the last twenty-five years. A very full history had been written for the 75th Anniversary and the idea was to prepare an update for the Centenary of the Club which was to be celebrated at Labour weekend. I had explained to him my situation with Elizabeth's terminal illness and that I could not consider doing anything under those circumstances. I had been somewhat flattered at the request and had indicated that I might be able to tackle it later. So it was that about the beginning of August I gathered together the records of the Club and began the task. I first read the previous history which was a careful account of the development and life of the club but did not seem to record very much about the golf itself. I resolved that I would try to introduce some comments on the players and the week by week activities of the club in addition to covering the significant historical developments. I was working with Neville Kerr on this task and he made available to me cuttings of his weekly golf notes which had been published by The Ensign over a number of years. These contained comments on various achievements by individual members that would otherwise have remained unrecorded in the annals of the club - things like holes-in-one, hotly competed matches, wild shots and very good scores achieved out of the blue by all levels of players. I was also able to feature articles on two or three members who had achieved success at District and even International levels. Final publication was held until after the centennial celebrations so that pictures and details of the weekend events could be included. I enjoyed the celebration and competed fairly well with my friend Mervin Matthews in the fourball event.

Late in July I spotted a For Sale board on a property in Eccles Street. It was one of two townhouses on the site of an original wooden house. I approached Fergus Nicholson who had acted for me on the sale of Devon Street. He approached the vendor who would not consider dealing with an agent so I made a direct approach. I looked through the house but thought it was priced marginally too high. I arranged for Susan to come down and together we looked it over and she was very well impressed. I made an offer somewhat below the asking price which he would not consider. So I asked if he would leave the fridge-freezer and the washing machine and he agreed. We came to agreement on the 10th of August 2004. The property has been all I could have expected and I have been very comfortable there.

My problem now was what to do about furniture. Most of my stuff had been distributed to the family and I only had the few items I had taken with me to Elizabeth's house. Susan returned the lounge suite, the dining table and chairs and the sideboard which she had taken rather than let them be sold. These filled a big void. Nic and Mel left me quite a bit of cutlery, kitchen tools and pantry stores from No 7 and I had retained my own pots and pans. I found a good double mattress and base at Alan Grace's and two single beds from Laughton's Emporium and felt I was well on the way. Dawn and Ron were helping me out in a number of ways and I wondered if David might be able to help me with the purchase cost which was considerably more than I had got for 9 Devon Street. This would

save my capital to continue to return me a reasonable income. I was very grateful that he helped me out with the extra finance. It was interesting that the new quotable value of the house was released on the very date of settlement at \$10,000 more than the purchase price. Six years later it has gone up another \$90,000. Buying this house brought me into a complex of six town houses with the other five units occupied by widows. They had an informal system of looking out for each other - ensuring the morning paper was collected and that the curtains were drawn each morning or some such sign that all was well - and I was immediately incorporated in to the system.

In the meantime I was still living at 7 Devon Street and doing my bit to maintain the garden in order while cooperating in open homes and viewing by prospective buyers. I think the eventual sale was made at a slightly disappointing price but the girls realised that the property carried with it a substantial load of maintenance work and it was wise to settle for what they could get. I did a great deal of the work on the golf history during this time. I dismantled the shelving which had been erected in the sunroom and generally gathered my possessions together ready for shifting to Eccles Street. I took possession on the 25th of October just after the Golf Club centenary weekend. I had hardly settled in before I was off by car to Christchurch on my way to Gisborne for the family birthdays and the Poverty Bay Seniors Golf Tournament. On the way I called on my cousin's widow Jean Elder at Northanger Retirement Home.

During this period I was continuing to receive messages and visits from friends. I was also attending other funerals. Included in these were Miss Bradfield of the Baptist Church, Bob McIntosh son of close friends of my parents, Charles Chittock a former client from Tapanui, Jenny Bredin's mother Evie Kearon, Owen Hymen, our former East Chatton neighbour Mick Ischia, Reg Cross my former client and husband of Jaqui of Senior Citizens. I went to Oamaru for the funeral of my cousin Ernie Elder. I had been in the habit of visiting Ernie and Jean while travelling north over recent years and had quite enjoyed renewing this acquaintance after many years without much contact. I drove up and arrived at Eveline Church to find a fairly small attendance. I found that I was one of a few Returned Servicemen who had come to honour Ernie's passing. I was proud to join the others and very pleased to meet up with the family members whom I did not know very well. I was the only representative from the wider Elder family so I was glad I had made the long trip and given family support.

During this time I received very warm consideration and love from both my Elder and Young families. The Youngs had welcomed me into their family circle and they allowed Elizabeth's death to make no change to our relationship. For my part, I had grown to love and respect them - they were still the children of the mother whom I had grown to love. This has applied to the wider Young family as well and I am welcome to call when passing, and they visit me as opportunity offers.

I was only just home from Gisborne when the news came that our very good friend Mattie Hamilton had died. She had a stroke and was able to leave her home for hospital but she passed away only a couple of days later. We all had wondered how she would bear

to to leave the home she had lived in for all her married life and which she had made very much 'her space'. The house was full of the lovely things she had collected over many years. It seemed so kind that she had been able to enjoy them almost to the very last. Her loss created gap in that circle of friends we had developed during Millie's early days in Gore and who had meant so much to her.

In November I shared with the Young family in the opening of the Fishing Display in the Gore Museum. The 'fisherman' was dressed in the fishing outfit of Elizabeth's father John Denford. For some reason he had given it to her during one of her more recent visits to England and she donated the outfit when she heard they were planning a display featuring the district as a trout fishing mecca. It was very effective and quite appropriate as he had done much fishing in Eastern Southland streams and rivers during his three visits to New Zealand.

In December I invited the St Andrews Choir to my new home in 32A Eccles Street for their Christmas Treat as a thank you for all their sympathy and concern. I planned to have strawberries with cream and ice-cream. The treat was to follow on after a brief practice so I arranged for Diane Keown to come in early and start the kitchen proceedings. The evening worked out very well. The next week I invited the Eccles Street neighbours in for morning tea as a thank you for welcoming me into their community.

The year 2004 ended with me very comfortably situated in this lovely home with very friendly neighbours. Truly God had guided and blessed me into this situation after all the travail of the year. On the 23rd of December I flew north from Dunedin to have Christmas in Wellington with Dawn. As I recall Susan and Roger flew up from Dunedin to join us in the afternoon of Christmas Day. Dawn and I had attended the Christmas service in Wellington Cathedral. It was nice to share with family this second-time first Christmas on my own with some of Millie's traditional Christmas decorations displayed in Dawns house as part of the occasion.

Grand Tour 2005

I flew to Dunedin on the 3rd of January, picked up my car from Ewen and Isla McPhail's and returned home. There are a couple of family birthdays which always seemed to take me by surprise as they follow so soon after the Christmas/New Year period. Libby was turning five and two days later Susan was 52. Susan and I celebrated the day with lunch at Table Talk which was one of her favourite cafes. Squeezed into the next few days were Travel Club, Probus Club and a visit from Dawn Gardyne and her daughter Marie which resulted in an invitation to dinner with them that evening. On 15th of January I left for a North Island tour of friends and relations.

I took a leisurely route on the drive to Dunedin, detouring through Berwick and Outram where I turned up Hendon Rd and onto the Wilson Memorial Drive. This road leads up to the Hendon district on the west side of the Taieri Gorge and was a well-known subdivision for soldier settlement after the war. The area marks the beginning of the Central Otago plateau and has been very well developed by the returned servicemen who took up land there. The Drive crosses the Lee Stream near where it enters the Taieri River. At this point Lee Stream runs through a deep ravine with a cliff overhanging access from the south and a very steep climb out on the north side. It comes out onto the Middlemarch road at Lee, an old village which is now completely deserted.

The next morning I went to Dunedin Central Baptist Church which was meeting in the Teachers College Auditorium. As it was vacation time there were a lot of students away for the break but even so there was a strong proportion of younger people in the congregation. The topic of the 30-minute sermon was "Through Grace - We Can". In the afternoon I called on my sister-in-law Win Elder at Ings Home and upon leaving met Peter Appleton who was minister of the South Dunedin Baptist Church. Peter was one of the young people who had been in the youth group in Georgetown some 45 or more years earlier. I went on

to visit our very good friend May Gerken in the PSS home at Caversham. May was terminally ill at this time but it was a great privilege to see her and spend a bit of time in her company.

I went on by the High Road to Portobello to Nic and Brian's place where I had a nice evening. I was commissioned to convey a bird bath and box of books to Mel in Christchurch. I made a note in my diary of the trip north that I bought petrol at Maheno for 119.5c for 91 octane - I marked it with three exclamation marks !!! My last fill at the time of writing cost 199.99c !!!!¹ This was my first visit to Mel and Jono's home which they had bought just at the start of Elizabeth's illness. Elizabeth never visited herself but she did see photos of the house and knew that they were pleased with the purchase. I was able to inspect the property which did adequately serve their present needs.

The next day was the trip to Picton. I stopped at Cheviot Golf course for some exercise. It is an unusual twelve-hole course and I played the full twelve with two balls at one under handicap. I travelled on the Lynx from Picton and was directed to a berth for the car on the same level as the lounge - no stairs to climb! After a night in Wellington with Dawn I set off again on the Wednesday morning and was able to spend an hour or so with Alex Gardyne in Waikanae. I note my admiration for him. He was quite crippled and a cancer in his jaw bone had required its removal with a subsequent face reconstruction - and yet he remained completely uncomplaining. At that time he was still playing golf with the seniors on Wednesday afternoons. I lunched at Shannon and again admired the Manawatu Gorge as I passed through on my way to spend the night with Len and Emma Gerken outside Taradale. I have enjoyed meeting up with Len in later years - we had spent our young days together in the Gore church. I may have commented before that he was one of two men I know who have celebrated silver weddings with two different wives - he was at this time about ten years into a third marriage. I made a special visit to Alan and Johanna Dunn. Alan was in an advanced stage of Parkinson's and could only speak in a loud whisper - but he still had a cheeky grin. Johanna was particularly grateful for the call and the talk we shared of earlier days with Mallochs in Invercargill.

I went on from there to Te Awango on the coast for a visit to the gannet colony at Cape Kidnappers. This had long been on my wish list and I found it very interesting. The tour group I went with was operated through the new Cape Kidnappers Golf Course. The tar-sealed road wound its way up a narrow canyon, crossing many stone-sided bridges over the mostly dry stream bed - it was a clear demonstration of the lavish spending required to create a top quality championship course in that location. The coach driver told us of the many balls that had been lost when the official group played a round after the opening ceremony. The fairways had been designed to lie along ridges that lead down to the cliffs or across deep ravines. Beyond the fairways and rough it was real tiger country which happily received any wayward shots.

The purpose of my trip was to see the gannets. There are four or five different colony sites on this very sharp point of land at the southern most end of Hawkes Bay. The gannets nest very close together and it is amazing how the incoming birds arriving with food for

1 And those were the Good Old Days ! (Ed)

the chicks are able to find their way to their own nests. If they attempt to land in the wrong place they are viciously driven off. I was amazed to hear that the young gannets eventually fly off to the Queensland coast of Australia for some 18 months or so before returning to their home colony to mate and breed. Subsequently they remain in New Zealand, spreading mostly to Northland for the remainder of the summer and the winter.

The next day I left Len and Emma and drove over the Napier-Taupo road towards Rotorua and then turning off for the Eastern Bay of Plenty by way of Murupara. This is a fascinating route, crossing three ranges of mountains interspersed with farming valleys between the rugged hills. I was heading to the Ohiwa Harbour near Whakatane where Ron and Lesley were on holiday in Sandbach Cottage. Lesley's brother Chris and his family came for two nights and Joe and Bev Kloppenberg visited us on the Sunday. The holiday bach was located on a sandspit at the mouth of a large shallow estuary with an open sea beach very nearby. The older ones did some surfing while the youngsters were swimming in the shallows - some of us walked the beach. It was a very relaxing time and I appreciated spending the break with family after all the events of the year.

On the Tuesday I first headed west to see Joyce Ingram at Welcome Bay in Tauranga. I then retraced my steps eastward planning to stay a night in Opotiki before going on to Gisborne the next morning. However, I changed my mind and decided to continue on to Gisborne that evening. I was perhaps not taking account of the fact that summer evenings in the North East corner of the country are nothing like the long twilight evenings we have down South. I tried to phone Ron to say that I was coming but the phone box was not working. I had no cell phone at that time. I decided I would need to be very careful on this lonely road travelling into the growing dark but I found that there were numerous truck and trailer units heading back to Auckland from delivery trips to Gisborne. The road was not so lonely after all. The trip went without incident but when I arrived Ron looked at me in horror as he had not been expecting me until the next day.² We agreed that it might be a good idea for me to get a cellphone so that I could call ahead to notify changes of plan in the future.

I spent some very happy days minding the girls, playing some golf, reading from Ron's bookshelves, taking Hannah to get 'animal photos' and catching up with Val and Ralph Williams and Dawn and Alan Box. Then I set out again through the very picturesque Waioeka Gorge for the Bay of Plenty to have a few days with Bruce and Johanna Elder in Tauranga, this time travelling more safely in full daylight. On the Sunday afternoon I had about two hours with Jim Gardyne and called on Sheila and Alan Freer. On Monday I had a very pleasant half-round with Johanna on her 9-hole Otumoetai course where I scored one under net par. I managed to par both of the par threes. Next was a visit to Elizabeth's cousin Lynne and her husband Lee Robertson in the Baptist manse in Paeroa. It was nice to talk with someone who had been so fond of Elizabeth and we had a lovely walk up a footpath in a spectacular ravine off the Karangahape Gorge which itself is very beautiful.

Next morning I set off for Auckland shortly after 9 am. I stopped for coffee at a very

² Ron pointed out very reasonably that if the journey had not been completed safely no one would have raised any alarm for perhaps a full 24 hours. (Ed)

well loved cafe in Ngatea before safely negotiating the high accident risk stretch of road ea around Maramarua and reaching Wally and Rose Turner's place at Papatoetoe before lunch. Wally is Elizabeth's uncle and they had been very fond of her. I was a nephew by marriage and was only about three years younger than Wally but they welcomed me just like a member of the family! We spent the rest of the day catching up with each other and in the evening I took them to their daughter Lesley's home in Mahia near Manurewa. Next day I offered to take them out for a drive and took them up through Hillsborough and Titirangi to the Waitakere Scenic Drive. Although they had lived in Papatoetoe for many years this was new ground for them. We stopped at the Aratika Centre which featured a lot of information about the Waitakere area and had a lovely lunch at the Nikau Cafe. At the north end of the drive, I navigated by instinct through Henderson's Lincoln Rd area to the northwest motorway and we came home by the direct route. Wally had served on the RAF ground staff during the war and had got very involved with the Italy Star Association in Papatoetoe. He took me to the RSA rooms to view a special embroidered quilt that had been made for the association.

I took a day trip north of the Harbour Bridge and met up with Alison Paterson at Kings Barn plant shop for lunch and a good chap. She told me of her new husband, Dave Whitehouse, for whom she had been a Hospice grief counsellor after the death of his wife. It is strictly not 'according to Hoyle' for counsellors to get involved in this way but who can stop it! She gave me directions to find Dallas and Sylvia Clark at Orewa and I spent some two hours or more with them. They had just had their Golden Wedding and were shortly to come South to celebrate again with their southern families. I came back over the bridge and into Spaghetti Junction just half an hour too late - I got stuck in the beginning of the evening rush.

This visit saw the end of my North Island tour and I headed straight for Wellington, staying a night in Taupo where I played a round on the well known Wairakei course. I was invited to join a couple who were playing in front of me. We shared first names and I asked him about his work. He was in Finance, he said and I asked what firm. The National Bank - this had been my bank for many years. A little later I noted a label on his wife's bag which read - 'Lady Anderson.' I learned afterwards that he was Chairman of Directors of the National Bank. I kidded myself that he did not know he was playing with the ex-Mayor of Gore. They were very pleasant company.

I stayed a short while with Dawn then headed into the South Island and home.

On the 5th of March I was invited to join a Pakeke Lions Club tour of the South Island. This club consists of retired people and conducts a very large business of recycling cardboard and old newspapers as a fundraiser. The major object of the trip was a two-day tour of Molesworth Station in the centre of the upper South Island. After a night in Christchurch we headed for Hanmer Springs where we were based for three nights. Evenings were spent in the hot pools and I found them a lovely relaxation. For the tour of Molesworth Station we travelled in two mini-vans under the guidance of a chap called Stirling who operates these trips. He was full of information about the station which is owned by the government, and

was operated by the Lands and Survey Dept. We covered about half of the station on the first day, lunching at the site of the original homestead and within a few hundred yards of the current homestead and farm buildings which were not open to visitors. We were staggered at the vastness of the outfit which consists of three or four original stations combined under one management. The Clarence River flows through a large part of the station on its way to the sea near Kaikoura. We went right to its source at the outflow from Lake Tenynson, a beautiful little lake under some quite lofty hills. One of them was named Mt Elder. The second day we covered the other part of the station and exited through the northern access through Rainbow Station near Lake Rotoiti and St Arnaud. This exit was through a short distance of rugged country and a narrow gorge which was very spectacular. We continued on to Nelson where we stayed a couple of nights. It so happened that David and Peggy were in Nelson that day at the conclusion of a conference David had been attending. We drove over to Takaka and back across the formidable Takaka Hill road and then went through Kaiteriteri Beach to a restaurant at Marahau. We dined outside in very pleasant conditions. I went to their hotel for a short time and then David delivered me back to my tour motel.

We continued on down the West Coast, enjoying the long stretches of luxuriant West Coast bush. As we approached Greymouth some of the party received messages on their cell phones about a tornado which had passed through the centre of the town. Less than half an hour later we drove through the city and saw some of the resulting wreckage of buildings and cars. As I recall, there was very no loss of life. We stayed a night at Hokitika and another at Haast. It was a wonderful trip and I was privileged to have been able to join it.

Shortly after my return I attended the funeral of Bernie Gentle. My family will recall him and his wife operating the small suburban grocery store at the top end of William Street in Gore just around the corner from our house. Later in the week I helped to celebrate Ewen McPhail's seventieth birthday at The Moth restaurant at Mandeville. Three weeks after Bernie's funeral we were saying farewell to Joyce Harvey who had lived with her father in William Street just over the back fence from our Albany Street house.

On Anzac Day I rang Dawn to wish her a Happy Birthday. I didn't attend the Dawn Parade that year but I went in to the RSA about 8.30am. I went out to the Waikaka Anzac Day service and parade at 10 am and went on the Esselmont farm for the afternoon. The following Sunday Nicola came to church and we had lunch at the farm and visited Elizabeth's grave at the Pukerau Cemetery. It had been Elizabeth's birthday the day before and it was a month short of a year since her death. We had a birthday cake after lunch.

Two weeks later I went through to Dunedin in time for the service at Susan's church at Opoho and had three nights with her and Roger. I was home in time for Nancy Paterson's funeral at Winton. She was the widow of my cousin Stan who was Auntie Fanny's son. Another break in the wider family connection.

The weeks went on with the succession of Travel Club, Rotary and Senior Citizens

weekly, Probus Club, Historical Society, Friday night cards, Wednesday and Saturday golf, and weekly Choir Practice. I made a day trip to Frankton for Frank Smith's funeral. Frank was in his late nineties and had become very frail in his last few years as a resident in Wakatipu Home. He had been a very faithful support to his wife Phyllis when she was in a geriatric bed in Wakatipu with advanced Alzheimers. He was laid to rest in Frankton Cemetery alongside a number of our other Queenstown friends.

Postscript: 90th Birthday

In 2008 Ivan planned a grand Family Gathering to be in Gore. The occasion - or excuse - was his 90th birthday. Meticulous and detailed planning took place during the first half of the year. The venue was to be the James Cumming Wing which Ivan had played a significant role in establishing during his time on Council. The guests were to be Ivan's closest friends in the Gore community together with his relations in the three families - the Elders, the Gardynes and the Youngs. Particular effort went into gathering contact information for Ivan's nieces and nephews in the Elder family. Ivan realised that he was the family patriarch and that they would respond to his invitation. And they did. Some travelled considerable distances from the other end of the country to attend. Some, Like Graeme Elder, gathered their own considerable extended families and brought them along for what they knew would probably be a once in a lifetime opportunity to meet their wider family. They came to celebrate a birthday milestone for one of their most loved and respected Uncles. But they also came to celebrate their own connections as cousins in the Elder family.

A number of speeches were given - sadly none of them were recorded at the time. Each of the Elder families had been asked to appoint a spokesperson to deliver a tribute in the form of a reflection on Ivan's significance to their family. Others like Gil Winwood spoke of Ivan's contribution to his community.

As usual Ivan's planning was detailed. Ron was to be the M.C. but not without some helpful direction. It was OK for the initial Welcome to be "In your own words." But from that point on Ivan was clear as to what he wanted to be said - even down to the stage directions as to which groups should stand to be recognised according to the designations on their name-tags. Ivan's instructions give an indication of the scope of the guest-list and the extent of the tribute that was paid by the guests to Ivan by their attendance:

Birthday Party - 11th Oct 2008

Welcome *(In your own words)*

This is primarily a celebration of Ivan's 90th Birthday but it has grown to be something more. For some years our family has been wanting to have a gathering of 'The Cousins' - that is of Ivan's nephews and nieces. So we have seized the opportunity of including them in this gathering. Ivan thinks that several of them might come to his "wake" when that occurs some time in the future - and he thought he would prefer to be present himself and to share "awake" with them.

The result is that this has become a gathering of several groups with their own connections to Ivan. So we are going to introduce each group so that everyone can get the picture.

First: Five Neighbours. Ivan lives in one of a group of six townhouses where the residents all look out for each other. Someone soon notices if another is not up to their usual routine - if the curtains are not drawn in the morning or if the paper is still in the box. A special welcome to the "Guardian Angels" - Elsie, Daphne, Peggy, Ruth and Barbara.

Second: Two people who were associated with Ivan during his years on the Gore Borough Council - Gil Winwood, our former Town Clerk with whom Ivan had an excellent relationship, and Gabriel Farry, who came onto the council latterly and later himself became Mayor of the Borough. Please welcome Gil and Gabriel and their wives, Wynne and Clare.

Next, a representative group of friends. As Ivan has lived in this town for so many years, this group would once have been much larger. They represent long-term friends of Millie and Ivan and some new friends he has made through Elizabeth who have been of special support over the last four years since her passing. Among them is Hugh Paterson who went to Primary School with Ivan.

Now Ivan's cousins. There are several first cousins present here today: Clarence and Margaret Gardyne, Bert and Ada Gardyne, Dawn Gardyne, George and Hazel Elder, Graeme and Shirley Botting, Les and Joy Gardyne and Chris Elder with her daughter Kath Bond. There are also some next generation Gardyne cousins with whom Ivan has been in closer touch over the years. A special welcome to Joyce Ingram from Tauranga, formerly Joyce Nichol, to Hugh & Kathie Gardyne, Graeme & Elspeth Gardyne and to Kathryn & George Smith.

Nieces and nephews and their families. There are about thirty of the The Cousins present today out of a total of forty, Grace and Nigel Wood from Blenheim are not able to be with us today and nor are Averil and John Ibbotson and Valerie and Larry Turner from Adelaide. A special welcome to Brian and Suzanne Pearce, and Trevor Pearce who have come all the way from Auckland and Marie Elder from Wellington and Janette and Ron

Boersma from Christchurch. There are also some Gt-Nephews and Gt-Nieces, especially from Graeme Elder's family.

Ivan's sister Vera Pearce. Vera and Ivan are now the only surviving members of the David and Elizabeth Elder family of six. Vera married Jock Pearce of Otahu Flat and went to live near Blackmount. Jock died in 1982 and Vera now lives in Invercargill. All of her children are here today.

Ivan's second family - The Youngs. Robert and Stacey Young with Sam and James and Libby, Nicola and Brian McGrouther with Cameron, and Melissa and Jonathan Cleese with Matthew. And also Elizabeth's in laws - Gladys and Harold Davidson. Isla McPhail, Harvey Young and his daughter Lyn Sharp, Eion Young and Ruby Young.

And finally Ivan's own family - Ron and Lesley, Susan and Roger and Dawn and Ivan's Granddaughters, Jamie and Hannah who gave out your name tags. David and Peggy and their children Kate and Kenneth from the USA are not here. David came to the Gore High School Centenary with Kate earlier this year and Ivan visited them all in the States in May.

Ninety Years is not an uncommon achievement these days. We have Norman, Peg Dickie (who is only three days older than Ivan), Elsie Soper, Bert and Ada Gardyne, Sid McPhail, Ruby Young and Alex Marshall who have all pioneered the way past the ninety mark.

The afternoon has been booked for three hours from 2 pm to 5 pm. However if anyone has urgent matters to attend to such as a lambing beat or an evening engagement or a 21st birthday party please feel free to slip away earlier if you wish.

Please enjoy the afternoon.

On with the Show.

Postscript - In Memoriam

Ivan Elder died on 2 February 2018. He was just six months short of his 100th birthday although he was proud of achieving what had seemed to be a more important milestone for him - outliving his mother who had lived to be 98.

His funeral was held at St Andrews Church in Gore, where Ivan had been a faithful parishioner for many years. The church was nearly full with community friends and acquaintances together with his Elder and Gardyne families and his newer Young family, gathering to honour his life. Tributes were paid during the service and more stories were shared during the afternoon tea following. The interment at Charlton Cemetary took place the following day with close family and friends in attendance. Six months later, in a brief ceremony conducted by his children Susan and Ron, his gravestone was unveiled to mark what would have been his 100th birthday.

What follows are the tributes that were presented at the funeral service on 2 March 2018.

Tributes to Ivan Elder

Rev'd Helen Martin (Minister of St Andrews Presbyterian Church, Gore)

This place of Christian worship has been Ivan Elder's spiritual home these last years and so it's right that we gather here to celebrate his life. We here choose to walk with one another in our sorrow at Ivan's death after a remarkably long and well-lived life. Thank you for being here. For some it has been quite an effort involving long distances and so we appreciate all that you have done to be with us here today. We greet again those family

members watching in Argentina and in the U.K.

Ivan loved his family, his friends, his church and his community. So many of us are going to miss him. But today we offer our particular sympathy to both of his families - the Elders and the Youngs. Ivan has been your family patriarch in the best sense of the word. And I know that you will miss his love and caring and his very real interest in all your activities, particularly if you are a golfer. I hope that what we do this afternoon will go some way to honouring him and helping you as you continue to say your goodbyes.

I'm aware that we have cousins and members of the Gardyne family here today. For those of you who have grown up with Ivan and into old age with him, this is a bit of a lonely day. But it is also a day of rich memories and warm gratitude for all that you have shared. I'm glad that so many of the groups that Ivan was a part of are here today. Senior Citizens are going to sing later in the Hall. RSA will have a tribute later. There are his golf buddies here, there's Croydon Aviation - to name just a few. A very warm welcome to you all.

Here on Ivan's casket are his medals and awards and in the Hall there are three photo-boards which contain some fascinating pictures that will bring back lots of memories for you.

My prayer today is that it will be a day of hope as we celebrate not only Ivan's life but also his Christian faith. Latterly, If we happened to mention to Ivan his wonderfully long life, he would reply that it hadn't always been easy. We'll hear more of that shortly. However, despite the ups and downs, and through the ups and downs, Ivan always knew God with him. He was a man who read the scriptures. He was a man of prayer. And he was known for both of these in whichever church he was worshipping - in the Baptist Church here in Gore in the early days, in the Presbyterian Church in Queenstown when he and Millie were retired, and finally here at St Andrews where he challenged us all to be more prayerful.

Prof Dawn Elder (Daughter)

Well. The dream run has ended.

We had almost started to believe it would never happen. Some of you know that for a few years now I have given Ivan the nickname 'Lazarus'. He seemed to beat the odds for survival after life-threatening illness on so many occasions, starting with Typhoid Fever in 1938 and Pneumonia with Pleurisy during the war years, both of these prior to the availability of antibiotics. When I added up his other serious illnesses it does seem to be that his 9 lives were really done with this last hospital admission.

Ivan was born at home in the main front bedroom of the farmhouse at East Chatton on August 13 1918. He reports in his autobiography that he was the only one of his siblings

to be born at home. During his last hospital admission he said to us exactly on Feb 11th: "In 2 days I will be 99 and a half." So Susan and Roger sent him flowers and a specially-edited card for his 99-and-a-half-th birthday.

Ivan wrote " Life as a small boy on the farm was always interesting and a small boy could also find trouble'. They made their own bows and arrows from willow branches and toitoi stems with a nail in the end to give the arrow weight. In the winter nights the boys often had wrestling bouts on the big kitchen floor. It was usually Vic and Wilfred against Alan and Ivan - Ivan was the youngest boy. He reported that these tussles sometimes required parental intervention.

He went to primary school at East Chatton. The school is not there now but was sited at a corner of the farm where some old trees now stand alone on the south end of Elder Road. Ivan fell out of one of those trees one day - he said it was a drop of about 6 feet. Perhaps he did have 10 lives after all. He described to us many times, a day at school when he felt there was some movement in the school room despite no wind outside - the lamp-shade was swinging. The family later learned from neighbours who had a radio that there had been a big earthquake in Napier. He would have been 12 at the time. The beautiful walking stick Ivan carried with him a little more frequently recently was a gift to him from the widow of Hugh Paterson, one of the Dad's East Chatton school classmates.

Ivan went to high school in Gore and biked to and from East Chatton each day, a distance of nearly 12 miles. No pick-up by Mum or Dad in the SUV in those days. There were three ways he could go and we were just talking about this the other day on what would have been his last trip out that way as we drove down Chittock Road. A detailed analysis about the different types of wind experienced on each route was provided for me!

Ivan never had the opportunity to complete university study. He had at one stage wanted to be a doctor. In 1936 he moved to Wellington having been accepted for a job in the Civil Service. He started in the Land and Income Tax Department. During this time he was studying for his accountancy exams in the evenings with his parents' financial support. In 1939 Ivan enrolled in a Bachelor of Commerce degree at Victoria University. He attended only 4 weeks of classes but was then offered a job with Malloch McLean in Invercargill and decided to take it.

During that time there were monthly ballots for military service. In early 1941 he was summoned for initial pilot training at Levin and then at Taieri. Further training was undertaken in Brandon, Canada before he arrived in England in 1942.

When Ivan returned to New Zealand four years later he was followed by his war-bride our mother Millie, and together they settled in Gore. When Millie's boat arrived in Lyttleton he managed to get on the pilot boat and so was able to board the ship before it berthed and have breakfast onboard with our Mother. Ivan the romantic - we didn't think of him like that !!! He continued working in accountancy in Gore, then Invercargill, and then back in Gore again. He was respected by his clients. He worked hard and often brought work

home at night - with his little mechanical adding machine that had a handle on the side. Around the time tax returns were due we often saw very little of him. As I looked through his recent bills this week I thought to myself that it was a little careless of an accountant of his experience to die in the middle of the month - all of his direct debits are due this week.

During his recent hospital admission the rehabilitation specialist was assessing his mental state. He asked Ivan to say the months of the year backwards. Now, Dad was more than a bit affected by the drugs he required for pain and by the anaesthetics that he'd had, and he said 'December' - and then he got a bit stuck. I could see that his brain was going and he was working it out. Then he changed tack and he came out with '12,11,10, 9, 8...' Definitely a numbers man. And I thought 'This would have done for me' - but I'm not sure it satisfied the clinician.

When we first sat down to plan how we would farewell Ivan, Susan asked us what words came into our mind when thought about our father. This is what we came up with: Honourable, Charming, Integrity, Warm, Cheeky Grin, Humour, Rock Solid, Good Friend, Duty, Family-orientated, Faith.

As a friend of mine said in a text to me this week: 'Absolute gem he was.'

We are not sure we can detail all he achieved in his long lifetime. You will have your own memories from the parts of Ivan's life that touched you.

Many of you know Ivan as a friend. He was such a very loyal friend. A great visitor to friends less mobile, and a support in times of trouble. He was particularly loyal in keeping in touch with both Millie and Elizabeth's friends and family after they had both died, as well as his own friends from the past.

He was also a great relative. He kept up with nieces and nephews. For our cousins Jean and Margaret in England, whose father died very young, Dad was a significant father figure despite the distance. He championed the cause of his brother Wilfred recently to tell the story of Wilfred's wartime record. It really was a Bucket List thing for him. It was very moving to see the local Invercargill cousins who came to say goodbye in the hospital. We really appreciated that.

Ivan took on the role of Patriarch of our branch of the Elder family. I have to say that Graeme would have made a great Patriarch also but sadly he is not with us now. So I'm really sorry Wally but you are in charge now - no escaping. However Ivan's cousin George will I think also step up to lead the Elder clan now for a while.

It seems Ivan was a pretty good husband also. As children you observe your parents marriage quite closely. You can see it has its ups and downs. When we were packing up Ivan's things at Parata I found a card written by our mother to Ivan on the occasion of their 50th wedding anniversary. The card on the outside says 'Thank You', and on the inside Millie

wrote:

For loving me
For 50 happy years
For 4 very special children
For your wisdom and constant support
For being so easy to live with
How did I know there would be all this in 1945?
I didn't
But the fact is that I love you even more than I did then
when I thought you were so special

Of course this is *not* what Millie said when Ivan told her there was not enough money to redecorate the living room but she later found a fancy new typewriter had appeared in the office.

When we were children growing up it was our mother who was the joke and story teller and the one who made us laugh the most. Dad was more into the bad pun. We all do that a bit now and smile a little wryly at each other recognising that this was a Dad thing and we can't help ourselves either. I remember one day groaning at one of Dad's puns. My mother said to me 'you should laugh at your father's jokes as he does try'. Well he definitely got the hang of it over time and became a great raconteur with a seemingly inexhaustible supply of jokes, many of them about golf and old age.

One golf joke of Dad's that particularly appealed to my rather black sense of humour was about a golfer who was very late home on a Saturday night and his wife asked him where on earth he had been. The golfer explained, 'Well we were just finishing number two and Harry dropped dead - so after that it was play a shot, drag Harry, play a shot, drag Harry.'

Dad loved his golf. I remember one day when they were living at Kelvin Heights that it was piss-sisting down with rain. Around 11.30 as usual on a Saturday he started making his cheese-on-toast snack ready to go. I looked out at the fairway of the hole we could see well from the house - I think it might have been No. 4. On this fairway puddles were forming. Quite large ones. 'It's a bit wet Dad,' I said, 'Are you really going?' Yes, he was going. After a while I said, 'Are you sure the golf course is open? Perhaps you should ring.' He rang - the course was closed. But he would have gone if he could have. Nothing could keep him from golf.

Ivan played golf in the Masters Games on a number of occasions and has the medals to show for it. I love the coverage from the ODT in February 2012. I quote: "Ivan Elder wears Bermuda shorts and long socks to his knees. It is golf attire from an earlier time. But there was nothing ancient about the golfing style of the 93-year-old retired Gore accountant yesterday."

While Millie was unwell during her last illness Ivan learned how to cook. He expanded his limited repertoire of porridge and eggs-and-bacon to include casseroles and puddings. Millie advised from the wings. When she died the Edmonds Cook Book was brought into play. One of the drivers after Millie died was to have dinner parties to raise funds for the Southland Hospice. Not having a woman about the house now, Ivan had to learn to multi-task. He worked out that if the corned beef was cooked for an hour in the morning, then you could turn it off, go and play a round of golf, and then come back to finish cooking the dinner for the evening meal.

Ivan enjoyed his food. A favourite was a Lamb Shank at the RSA which he often had with an egg on the side. It was a major protein hit but that is what he wanted. The Friday lunch-time meals at the RSA with the regular crew of old friends were a highlight in his week. When I was asked if we would like pikelets at the afternoon tea today I said 'Yes Dad would love that!' - that was because he used to make his own when entertaining guests for afternoon tea.

We often teased him about the foods he didn't like and threatened to cook him a banana pie with a walnut and coconut topping for desert. The fastest way to his heart was to cook him Apple Pie or Apple Crumble. I am very pleased to report that the last meal he was able to thoroughly enjoy during his final hospital admission included apple pie. God is reported to work in mysterious ways and getting apple pie on the menu that day sure has to be an example of that.

Now many of you may be surprised to know that Ivan did not vote Blue (National Party) at the last election - nor for one or two before that. Some of you will be saying how interesting. Others of you will be saying - yes, I thought there was some dementia there. Even at the age of 99 Ivan supported change and wanted the best opportunities to be available to everybody in our communities.

On Anzac Day last year Ivan was asked to do a speech at Waikaka. He spent a long time crafting this speech. This is what he said at the end: '... it behoves us to look in the mirror and see some of the hardships endured by sections of our own people here in NZ. There are so many people who are suffering hardship as the result of poverty. It ill behoves our government to consider tax cuts (which usually benefit the higher levels of society) and leave the poor still struggling on their meagre resources.' He also said 'It behoves our people (including us here today) to treasure our children and give them the best chance possible in life. Let us do our part to preserve peace, to raise our children to be worthy citizens and to help those who are at the bottom of the pile.'

I do wonder what would he say about Simon Bridges as the new leader of the National Party. How frustrating it is to be able to have that conversation.

Ivan's life was a life of service - to the churches he attended, to Rotary (if you Google 'Ivan Elder' you can see a story about that), to the town of Gore through his time on the

Council and as Mayor, to Victim Support, to Senior Citizens and all the other organisations he was involved with. He was the Patron of Croydon Aircraft and of the Historical Society. We just don't have time to tell you the detail about all Ivan did and achieved. We are hearing about stuff we didn't even know he did over the past week. We hope some more stories will be added from you while we have our cup of tea.

Now I need to tell you that when I was little I was teased by my big brothers Ron and David - yes, you two - because I couldn't wink or whistle. This was of course very traumatic for me and I felt that I needed to have a younger brother or sister that I could terrorize in similar fashion. I made this request to my mother. Funnily enough she did not oblige.

Turns out I was asking the wrong person. In 2002 Ivan married Elizabeth and I acquired a little brother and two little sisters – all of them already competent at winking and whistling, I believe. Ivan's marriage to Elizabeth was a great delight to him. We feel very privileged to have this addition to the family and have really appreciated the way Elizabeth's children and their partners have all loved and respected Ivan in return. Without Stacey and Robert's careful care over the last 16 years or so, Ivan would have been completely without immediate family on the local scene. For the next generation of the Young family Ivan has been a much loved Grandad. Libby will now talk about what that has meant to her.

Libby Young (Step-Granddaughter)

One of my earliest memories is my fourth birthday. It was quite the affair. Each little girl and boy was expected to dress up as either a fairy or a pirate. So, of course, Ivan showed up dressed as a very beautiful Fairy. It was just the way he was - life was far too important to take too seriously.

It was not long after that birthday that my Gran, and Ivan's wife, passed away. Ivan was married to my Gran for just short of two years, but he was my Grandad for the following 16. Ivan didn't have to be our Grandad - he had every reason and opportunity to disappear into a memory with my Gran. However, he stayed, and from then on the idea that Ivan wasn't my 'real' Grandad seemed ludicrous. In fact, it *was* ludicrous - Ivan was everything a Grandad should be and more.

Ivan devoted more time to us kids than we would ever really appreciate. Ivan showed up to every school event, award ceremony and piano concert I had. To this day he showed up to more piano recitals of mine than my own parents. This was quite an effort considering not only were these functions incredibly enduring, but Ivan probably only heard about 50% of what was going on.

Whenever we saw Ivan we were greeted with a bear hug, and more often than not strawberries. When Ivan would come out for dinner, we would all sit around the table and Ivan would say grace. And we would all open our eyes to see envelopes with our names on them. Unfortunately, these weren't ever allowed to be opened until after dinner. During

dinner Ivan would almost always have some adventure, or some story to re-tell. I suppose with such an interesting life, how could he not.

Before I left home at the end of last year, I went and saw him in the hospital. Right before I left that day, Ivan looked me dead in the eye and told me to make sure I made the most of all the time I had left. Ivan lived not only a long, but an incredibly meaningful life. He was real, joyful, generous and he touched the lives of many, as you can see today.

Ivan taught us the easiest lesson in the hardest way. Nothing lasts forever. It was his legacy, and I suppose it's up to us now to try and live life as meaningfully as he did.

Mayor Tracey Hicks (Gore District Council)

All of those who knew and worked with Ivan over his many years in this community feel the loss and share your grief at this time.

Ivan's official local Government service officially began in 1965 and stretched through until 1980, with seven years as Councillor and eight as Mayor. But all who knew Ivan recognised that his concern for the welfare of others and the well-being of this community covered a much longer time than the years recounted in the record books of local government - it covered decades.

From the time of his election to the Gore Borough Council those who hadn't previously known him or of his ability became aware of a man who had great character, a man of vision, a man who had drive and integrity, and a man who had the capacity to build the capability of this community.

While some may regard Ivan as an initially somewhat reluctant entrant into the world of local politics, he was a man who held a deep faith in God. He was indeed the man for the time and the one man the Gore community needed at that time.

Ivan was a man who could see the big picture and yet take care of the detail. I think an extract that I've found from his election profile published in the Ensign preceding his final term as councillor before becoming Mayor sums up his philosophy of local government and the role of the community.

'The basic consideration must be always the town as a whole, the provision of necessary facilities for all age groups, the development of an attractive environment, and the continued efficient administration of the borough affairs'

In a nutshell he summed up the role, and he well and truly fulfilled his commitment. He certainly wasn't a single-issue politician. but neither was he a politician who shied away from the issues of the day.

He played a key role in projects such as the establishment of the Gore Senior Citizen's Club and the James Cumming Wing, facilities which we take for granted today. Ivan had a pivotal role in their establishment.

The list of projects Ivan was connected to as Mayor were many and varied and we don't have time to cover them all today. But without doubt they all add to the capacity of this place we now know and love.

After some initial discussion within the community the Senior Citizen's club had its beginnings with a public meeting being called by Mayor Elder to discuss the merits of the proposal. The meeting was enthusiastic about the concept. However, there were only a small number of older people present, and it was decided to canvas the community to see how many might be interested in joining such a club. Within a very short time 600 names were delivered back from the survey of people who wanted to become members immediately. So the need was established very quickly and the task became a fait accompli.

With the Lions Clubs of Gore spearheading the fundraising, the club building we now see in place today quickly became a reality. At an early meeting of the club the first three life memberships were awarded, one of which was to Mayor Ivan Elder. As I understand it he was not age-qualified to be a member at the time but such was their appreciation for his efforts towards the establishment that they were eager to accord him that honour.

Interestingly, on the 30th anniversary of the club and after having joined the club officially and serving three years as president, he was awarded a second life membership. I'm not sure that many people can say they have had that kind of recognition.

Two years into his Mayoralty and after Ivan's chairing of the investigation committee into its feasibility, the James Cumming Wing construction was complete - a major achievement for both the town of Gore and the wider district.

With the Governor General unavailable for the opening event the Mayor invited the Prime Minister Norman Kirk to do the honours. A Labour Prime Minister, no less. An invitation not without controversy given the 'Blue Ribbon' nature of this electorate, and one which resulted in a number of Letters to the Editor. However, the event went without a hitch and the PM was a hit. Interestingly, the local member of parliament at the time Mr J.B. Gordon acknowledged in a newspaper column a few days later how the mayor was absolutely correct in his invitation and congratulated him on his wisdom.

Ivan was always focused on doing the right thing as opposed to the popular or convenient thing, and I note two examples of that style playing out.

When I did some research it seems that not much has changed over the years in terms of the issues local government has to deal with. Issues such as water and wastewater, and infrastructure as well as fluoridation were topics very much front and centre in Ivan's

day as they are now.

Indeed, on the water/wastewater front, to do what was required to be done in 1974 to bring systems up to speed meant rates had an increase of 24%. I shudder at the very thought but it had to be done and he wasn't about to shirk from that duty. He was duly returned at the next election.

The history of the fluoridation debate in Gore is a long and arduous one, but in the 70s Gore was fluoridated largely because of the endeavours of two men, Ivan Elder and Peter Wood. Peter's commitment was based on the pain and suffering he saw in front of him every day in his dental surgery, and Ivan's as usual was based on the science available and what he was reading about the subject. Not long after Ivan retired the council overturned its stance on fluoridation. A few decades on and with the luxury of hindsight in my mind they were right - fortunately that responsibility has since been removed from the perview of local government.

In the closing years of his mayoralty Ivan, in partnership with his long-time Town Clerk Gilbert Winwood, faced what I reckon was one his greatest challenges. And it was a challenge that I certainly didn't appreciate and possibly many don't. Both were appointed by the then Prime Minister Rob Muldoon to administer the Flood Relief Fund established following the devastating 1978 floods. I initially thought that that flood relief fund was a Southland-focussed thing. Actually it encompassed the whole southern end of the South Island from Oamaru south and it was a huge role - a role that took up a lot of time and energy on both these men's parts and certainly Ivan was the right man to take it in hand. Interestingly there was no choice as to whether they would take up this task as Rob Muldoon, in his usual style, made it quite clear that they were the right people for the job and they should just get on and do it. Politics being what it is, Mayors of the larger cities weren't too enamoured at the appointment of the Mayor of Gore. But they had no choice and it is good to see that Gore was leading the way once again.

Ivan's service was recognised in 1982 with him receiving a Queen's Service Order (QSO). This was presented by the then Governor General Sir David Beattie at a ceremony in the Christchurch Town Hall. It was a very fitting tribute to the service that he had given over all those years.

A lasting memory that I and Robin my wife have of Ivan dates back to December of 2004. I was elected in October of that year and by December we were in our first round of community Christmas celebration visits that we needed to make as part of the role. I can clearly remember the day when we were rushing to get to the Senior Citizens Annual Dinner. I was a little bit late and rushing in the door, putting the chains over my head as I was going in and probably muttering about the need to wear chains. Ivan very gently took both of us aside and gave us a firm but frank little lecture about the role of the office and about the role and importance of the badge of the office and of the need for it to be front and centre every we went out on a public or civic occasion. Needless to say that has occurred ever since. And also0 needless to say both the Mayor and the Mayoress are wearing their

chains today.

Can I finish by reading a piece of poetry that was used in a tribute to Norman Kirk following his untimely death at a memorial service that Ivan organised in the James Cumming Wing several months after Kirk had been here to open the building. Its a poem by Josiah Holland and it talks about the men that we need.

GOD, give us men! A time like this demands
strong minds, great hearts, true faith and ready hands;
Men whom the lust of office does not kill;
Men whom the spoils of office can not buy;
Men who possess opinions and a will;
Men who have honor; men who will not lie;
Men who can stand before a demagogue
And damn his treacherous flatteries without winking!
Tall men, sun-crowned, who live above the fog
In public duty, and in private thinking;
For while the rabble, with their thumb-worn creeds,
Their large professions and their little deeds,
Mingle in selfish strife, lo! Freedom weeps,
Wrong rules the land and waiting Justice sleeps.
Josiah Gilbert Holland

Ivan Elder was in my mind the epitome of a gentleman. A man who was gentle. A man who was strong. A man who was wise. And for Gore, a man in the right place at the right time to lead this community. We will miss him.

Rev'd Dr Susan Jones (Daughter)

My Dad saved me from drowning at the age of 2 or 3 on Oreti Beach! My memories of this are mostly from family talk, but I strongly remember the panic of being knocked over by successive waves, which I had unfortunately stood with my back to, and being unable to catch my breath. Dad was my hero!

Many husbands and fathers are heroic. Though he might have had a practical farm upbringing, Dad was an office-bound professional by training. However, I remember an impressive curved wooden slat fence at our Albany St house which he made with my brothers. He poured his own concrete pavers for a patio - complete with bevelled edge! And laid them. He would've been about 46 at the time. Mum and he made a good gardening duo – Mum decided where the plants would go and Dad planted them! A neighbour once said with disgust however that she couldn't see why the Elders' nemesias on the street looked so good as they were full of weeds! I thought that perhaps the weeds were holding them

upright!

I've celebrated many funerals of people with children about my age. They reminisce of the time when our age-group led what seemed halcyon lives – summer was summer, camping trips for some, staying in cribs or baches for others (depending on what island you lived in), boiling up the thermette to make a pot of tea (no tea bags), singing to while away the miles in the car ('Are we there yet?'), picnicking with no fast food outlet to be seen. We had those holidays too.

Dad daringly bought a boat when we were teenagers. A wooden structure, it was really too heavy for its 25 hp Evinrude engine. It could carry us children alright for water-skiing - that is, when my brothers thought the water in Frankton Arm was warm enough! But you had to thrust the throttle right to its limit before the engine realised it would have to pick up Dad this time. He'd hang on for grim death, creating a huge bow wave of water in front of him, making the resistance worse. We hoped he'd give up and let go as he wasn't a great swimmer and we didn't want him to go too far into the deep cold lake. But characteristically, he stuck at it - he learned to water-ski and enjoyed his stately circuits round the Frankton Arm.

Holidays for Dad must have been hard work as the cedar weatherboards of the crib always seemed to need oiling or there was some other kind of maintenance! They were good days for us children with our parents' friends - the Hamiltons and the Gardiners, the Smiths and the Gardynes, the Fougères and the Broadbents. Our families would play tennis at the courts in the Queenstown Gardens. And even as we grew more expert, Dad was always the wiliest player - he played very very sneaky drop shots. He was very competitive.

During university holidays, being a girl, I couldn't get the high-paying summer jobs my brothers could, so Dad's office was the solution. It was interesting being the boss's daughter. I soon decided telling tales out of school to the Boss at home was not a good idea. I remember Dad asking how I was finding it as we walked to work one day. I confessed to finding filing boring - this was what I did for the most-part. I was amazed when he said he did too! You could tell that, because the pile of files-in-progress rose to dizzy heights on his desk before he would return them to the outer office. Often one of the staff would ask me to go into his office to retrieve a file, rather than beard the boss in his den themselves! This bemused me as although Dad was a serious father and could be very firm, I was never afraid of him.

As I grew, I realised Dad's greatest asset was his integrity. It was a matter of honour to him that you did the right thing and were honest in all your dealings. Years ago a friend asked me to do something I suspected was dodgy. When I asked if it was entirely legal, she snorted and said in disgust, "Susan, you are the straightest person I know!" I took it as a compliment - a sign I had inherited something special from Dad. That integrity could make him firm to the point of sternness. I guess a lot of you may have been present when Ivan Elder tired of the discussion and stated very firmly what was the right thing to do. That seemed often to be the end of it! A little bit of Calvinism peeping in there, I think. Dad

seldom expressed anger, however, so when he became emphatic like that, you listened.

It was that integrity that led his fellow Baptist Church officers to nominate him for Mayor. I remember the large brown foolscap envelopes with hefty agendas in the letterbox each week. Perhaps the greatest service Mum and Dad did for Gore was to reluctantly leave their gardening on Saturday afternoons during the pre-Christmas break up season, go in, change into their glad-rags and attend community Christmas parties. They always came home enthusing about the wonderful volunteer work being done in the town. (So maybe what he said to you, Tracey, he had learned from someone else himself.) One year, Dad told the old joke about the man phoning the nursing home to get progress on his wife giving birth, but dialling the local cricket ground by mistake. He was told that the score was '122 all out and the last one was a duck.' Dad was delighted when at another event later the same year the same joke was told by another speaker.

Ivan Elder was prepared to move with the times even though he held firmly to traditional values in the main. I was impressed as a teenager in the sixties when Council was petitioned for Sunday night screenings at the St James Theatre. The argument was that young people, hanging round the centre parks (the ones that aren't there now) with nothing to do, were getting into trouble. After Sunday night church, Dad packed us into the car and drove along Main St to check this out. And it was true. Despite having been nominated by fellow-Baptists, he voted for Sunday night movies. I was impressed that he had bothered to check out the facts and think for himself.

Dad's faith was important to him as it was to Mum. They worked hard at Gore Baptist Church when we were children and teenagers. Mum taught Bible Class and led the children's Ropeholder missionary support group, Dad was a deacon and church treasurer. Once he showed me a piece of number 8 fencing wire twisted into a circular base with an upright spike, telling me it was the former treasurer's filing system! Gore burglars didn't know weekend offerings were kept in our under-stairs cupboard on Sunday night under the shelves of raspberry jam, or that Dad would have been a good target as he walked to work on Monday carrying the offering to the bank!

I loved walking to work alongside him in the school holidays prior to Christmas when I was working in the office. He seemed to know everyone. Men would murmur to each other "Compliments of the season" and like other men he would greet women whom he knew by doffing his hat or in latter years simply straightening the brim. I loved going to Father-and-Daughter nights at Rotary in the tearooms upstairs on Main St. One speaker told of his trip to the Calgary Olympics. When it took 20 minutes to describe getting to the plane in Invercargill I knew it was going to be a long night!

Mum and Dad made a good fundraising team. Mum had the ideas – cone-picking for firewood and potato-growing - and Dad with other men of the church would provide the reliable person power. I remember Sandy Donald, Eric Johnston, my uncles Victor and Wilfred Elder, Horry Copland. We kids would all tire by lunchtime! My Gore-based cousins will remember those days. We first went out to the farms to plant potatoes, then a couple

of times to hoe up, then came the harvest. Great big bags of spuds were the result. Well into Saturday evening there would be Dad with the other men hefting these huge sacks up on the trucks and trailers and delivering them around town before getting a break for themselves. None of those pretty little boxes of Perlas we use now!

Dawn mentioned accountancy. Dad recently received a certificate commemorating 75 years as a chartered accountant. The story goes that they had to design a special certificate for the occasion as they didn't have one for accountants that old. It was only last year that he hired his first accountant for his own books and it was a joy to hear him and his relatively young - because everyone was relatively young beside Dad - female accountant talking tax credits like a pair of old pros! The work he brought home was sometimes a collection of chocolate boxes full of receipts for a local charitable group, club or society - I would guess he probably did that all of that work pro bono.

When we were sorting papers last year Dad could remember the price of every house he had bought or sold. Neither he nor Mum were acquisitive, however, and they supplemented all that pine-cone collecting and potato-growing with their own personal charitable giving. I'm grateful for their modelling that you sorted out your giving as one of your first priorities on the budget then dealt with other costs.

These stories sum up the Ivan Elder I knew in my early life: protector of his children, practical handy man, home gardener, a good friend with other couples his age, willing to try a new sport, competitive, honest, firm in his opinions, a community man, willing to be convinced change was needed, a man of faith backed up by hard work, charitable, careful with money in the short term so he could be generous later.

Dad had his faults as we all do, but that made him a complete human being. Today I hold his faults and his strengths together in creative tension, with love.

Dawn said Dad had a dream run and so he did. Only in the last few months did his health really begin a roller-coaster ride and the more serious illness after his hip operation only lasted two weeks. That period, however, took a lot of dealing with as a family and I have deep empathy now for those of you who face uncertainty and chronic illness yourselves or in a parent or spouse for longer or are facing it now stretching into the future. I understand much better now. Stand tall - have courage.

I have also become more aware over recent months of the quiet way this community Dad knew so well has been supporting him. From little things like returning his stick to him when he left it frequently at counters in cafes and shops, to large things like transport to Invercargill and travelling considerable distances to visit him. Thank you for the friendship and support that you have shown as a community and wider family. We are grateful for the hospitality shown him at Parata and Windsor Park and for care shown by Gore Hospital staff. That's not to say he was not well cared for in Invercargill but the smaller Gore Hospital meant Dad was known and recognised and that was important to him. He was deeply appreciative of the work done by nurses and care-givers and he tried to make sure he thanked

those who did a service for him. That was a very firm point for him. One of the nurses at the hospital said to me, "He respects our work." That was very true and he liked to show it.

We are especially grateful to Stacey and Robert Young. Stacey was our pair of eyes on the ground as it were – we knew we would get a competent medical assessment as well as a loving response to any crisis often at inconvenient times. Thank you both - and thanks to you and your siblings for giving Dad another set of grandchildren in whom to take delight. I would like to specially mention my brother Ron and sister Dawn for the lions' share of the work which they have done in supporting Dad and organising this gathering - David and I both wish to acknowledge that.

One of the perils of losing the last parent is that the kingpin is no longer in the home town to draw you back. It is probably inevitable that we will visit here less frequently though Dawn has become a ratepayer now so maybe we will not be cutting all ties! It would be nice not to lose a community as well as a parent. Gore was a good community for us to grow up in and we benefitted from its small town connectedness. The older I get the more I appreciate my roots - especially being in the North Island where you sometimes have to tell people where Gore is.

We are grateful to Dad for bringing us into this world, even going halfway across the world to find a woman who would share the job with him. We are grateful to you for coming here today, and to Dad for bringing us all together in different ways.

So it is that we celebrate a life well lived. And I think you can hear echoing down the world the words: "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Ivan George Elder
32A Eccles Street, Gore,
New Zealand