

A NEW HOME

As Val and I increasingly became aware that using the stairs in our house several times each day was becoming more difficult we made the decision in 2012 to sell our Merri Beach house (after 48 years ownership and 39 years permanent residency) and look for a suitable single-level house in Gerringong where we wanted to remain. Being aware houses that would meet our requirements were not always available for sale at any particular time and there was no guarantee that our house would sell quickly, we prayed that God would ensure that the whole process would proceed with minimal hassles. The answer to prayer was far more remarkable than we could have imagined. Shortly before putting our house on the market in September 2012 our next door neighbour came in with a written offer which we accepted immediately. Even more extraordinary proof of God's hand in this was in the timing - on the previous night I had rung the daughter of Cecily Lheesman (whom we had known well before her death a few weeks earlier) and asked to let us know whether her family would be selling their late mother's house at 7 Boolangatta Avenue, Gerringong (3 streets west of Pacific Avenue). As they were intending to sell, we briefly looked at other houses but decided that 7 Boolangatta Avenue would be our home - hopefully for the rest of our lives. Shortly afterwards both contracts were signed - the sale of 43 Pacific Avenue and the purchase of 7 Boolangatta Avenue.

Sharing Memories. A week before we moved Val arranged for our whole family to join in a farewell dinner. With a mixture of joy and sadness each one of us shared a story of some memorable occasion in the house. While it was fun it was also a reminder, not so much of

the house but the joy we had experienced as a family over the years. We gave thanks to God for all those wonderful memories.

5
January
2013
Moving House With the generous help of every member of our family we moved into our new home with very few hassles

Another extraordinary part of this story is that three weeks later on a night that Aditi had a number of friends staying for a birthday sleepover in our new home mini-cyclones hit Merri Beach and other nearby areas significantly damaging our former Pacific Avenue home. We can only imagine the injuries if the girls had been sleeping in the lounge room of that house - the room that sustained the most damage.

"We have settled well into our new home which is ideal for us at our stage of life. There are no stairs and the house is still large enough to entertain friends and for Debbie, grandchildren or visitors to stay overnight.

A BLESSED LIFE

A.B. Facey's autobiography is titled "A Fortunate Life." I prefer ^{to} describe my life as "A Blessed Life." as I have experienced the truth expressed by St. Paul in Romans 8:28: "we know that in everything God works for good with those who love Him." Even when I didn't understand the reason for events at the time - especially in leaving full-time ministry - I now recognise that God was providing for me to serve Him in different ways that He had planned.

I continue to thank God that in my younger days I was taught about Jesus' love in dying for me and, by God's grace, at 16 years old I accepted Him as Lord and Saviour. That decision while still in High school has been the basis of the direction of my life ever since. While I have frequently come short in my faithfulness to Him, God has never deserted me and He has provided for me in so many wonderful ways.

I continually thank God that He brought Val into my life and that we fell in love and married. At the time of marriage neither of us could have imagined the experiences we have shared in more than 50 years together but it is far greater than I could ever have anticipated. I doubt that either of us gave much thought to life in our old age but our love for each other has not diminished - in many ways it is deeper than ever. Val supported me when ministry appointments meant moving to new areas several times and when ^{the} whole direction of our lives changed with the decision to leave Christian ministry. I also realise something of the emotional pressure my health issues placed on her, but her loving support never wavered. We have been extraordinarily blessed.

in being given four wonderful children. It has been a delight to see them growing into mature responsible adults. They have all contributed positively to their community and their various places of work. Three of them have married and become marvellous loving parents while Debbie is an extraordinary Auntie to our seven grandchildren who in turn think the world of her.

The further amazing blessing has been the gift of seven grandchildren and we have been able to see them developing with each demonstrating their individual personalities and abilities. Val and I constantly pray for God's blessing on their lives and that we will continue to be an influence for good in their lives, that particularly, as we live in a way that is pleasing to God, it may help them to want to know and serve Him.

As I come closer to the end of my life I recognise God's hand in every part of that life and I am encouraged to take St. Paul's words and make them my own:

"I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

(Romans 8: 38, 39)

APPENDIX 1 . OUR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION

Mark. 1969 Kindergarten - Hilltop Road P.S.
1969-1971 Years 1 & 2 The Oaks P.S.
1972 Year 3 Barker College Junior School
1973 Year 4 Peakhurst P.S.
1974-75 Yrs 5 & 6 Gerringong P.S.
1976-81 Yrs 7-12 Kiama High School
1982-85 Uni of Wollongong - Electrical Eng.
1994 (May) Graduated MBA Uni of Wollongong. (grad BE 1986)

Debbie. 1970-71 Kindergarten/Yr. 1 The Oaks P.S.
1972 Yr 2. Hornsby South P.S.
1973 Yr. 3. Peakhurst P.S.
1974-77 Yrs 4-6 Gerringong P.S.
1978-81 Yrs 7-10 Kiama High School
1982-83 Wollongong Tech College (Child Care)

Janelle 1973 Kindergarten Peakhurst P.S.
1974-79 Yrs 1-6 Gerringong P.S.
1980-85 Yrs 7-12 Kiama High School
1986-89 Uni of Wollongong (BMath degree-computing)
(Graduated BMath 1990)
1994 (May) Graduated MBA Uni of Wollongong
2014 (?) Diploma of Education (Uni of New England)

Susie 1977-83 Kindergarten-Yr 6 Gerringong P.S.
1984-89 Yrs 7-12 Kiama High School
1990-91 Dapto (?) Technical College (Accounting)
1991-94 Uni of Wollongong (BEC course - Accounting)
(Graduated '95 (?) BEC)
2000 Diploma of Education (Uni of N. England)

APPENDIX 2 - IMPORTANT DATES 1973-2017

General - Personal

December 1973 - We moved to Warri Beach.

- I commenced work at Wollongong University College

21st July 1974 - My first heart attack *

27th June 1985 - I had heart by-pass surgery

October 1973 - I retired

4th March 1999 - Val retired

25th January 2013 - We moved to 7 Coolangatta Ave.,
Gerrigong.

* Note. My heart disease was almost certainly caused by migraine medications taken over many years.

Marriages

- 2nd January 1988 Janelle Anne Butthbertson married Alan Norman Eaton - I officiated at St. George's Gerrigong (later divorced)

- 7th July 1990 Mark Stephen Butthbertson married Joanna Enid Bowcher at Gerrigong Uniting Church - I officiated assisted by Rev. Laurie Gray.

23rd March 1996 Susan Jennifer Butthbertson married Eric Boardman at St. George's Gerrigong - I officiated.

1st July 2001 Janelle Anne Butthbertson married Shiraj Basnet (born 27 April 1974) in India
8th September 2001 I officiated at their Australian wedding at St. George's Gerrigong

Births

- 10th November 1995 Peter Mark Luthbertson born
at Shoalhaven Hospital, Nowra.
24th October 1997 Samuel William Luthbertson
born at Shoalhaven Hospital, Nowra.
1st January 2000 David Trevor Luthbertson
born at Shoalhaven Hospital, Nowra.
1st February 2001 Jessie Jade Boardman born
at Wollongong Hospital.
21st February 2002 Aditi Luna Basnet
born at Royal North Shore Hospital.
22nd May 2002 Sam Lorraine Boardman
born at Shoalhaven Hospital, Nowra.
28th July 2004 Jude Raj Basnet born at
Hurstville Community Hospital (?)

Deaths

- 31st May 1963 - Val's Dad: William Charles
Luthbert Hickson (age 49)
19th June 1979 - My Mum: Jessie Steward Luthbertson
(age 72)
1st September 1979 - My Dad: Albert John
Luthbertson (age 71)
28th July 1997 - Val's Mum; Leah Merle
Hickson (age 81)
12th January 2017 Val's brother Ray.
- Raymond William Hickson (age 72)
8th October 2017 - My brother Alan (age 87)
- Alan John Luthbertson

APPENDIX 3 OVERSEAS HOLIDAYS

April 1995 - Beijing (1 week)

April/May 1996 England, Europe, Ireland
Singapore (2 nights); London (3n) - Trafalgar tour to Paris (3n); Lourdes, Vitoria, Madrid (2); Barcelona (2); Nice (2); Florence; Naples; Rome (3); Venice (2); Vienna (2); Innsbruck, Lucerne (2); Koblenz; Amsterdam.
Debbie joined us in London (6) then Dublin, Cork, Killarney, Galway - Horley (sth of London) Salisbury, Bath, Little Mill (sth Wales), Preston (Lakes District); Edinburgh (2); York; Ragnal (2); Cambridge; Stow-on-Wold (Cotswolds) (2); Oxford (2); Hong Kong (2)

January 1998 Christchurch (with Fanelle and her friend James) - Dunedin, Te Anau (2) & Milford Sound; Queenstown, Christchurch.
(Fanelle and James drove us to the west coast for the weekend)

September/October 1998 Canada and USA.
Vancouver; Rocky Mountaineer Train; Banff, New York, Newport, Boston, Quebec, Montreal; Ottawa; Toronto; Niagara Falls; Lancaster, Washington DC; New York; Hawaii

February/March 2005. New Zealand.
(from memory) Auckland; Bay of Islands; Coromandel; Rotorua; Napier; Wellington. Pictou; Nelson; Christchurch.

October 2007 Norfolk Island (1 week)

March/April 2013 New Zealand cruise.
Flew to Wellington then on to Auckland, Bay of Islands; - then cruise from Auckland, Fauranga, Wellington;

Akaroa (Christchurch); Dunedin; Milford & other
Sounds; Melbourne; Sydney.

March/April 2015 (with Debbie) European
River Cruise;

After three nights in Budapest, the river
cruise on the Danube, Main and Rhine
Rivers included visits to Vienna, Linnstein;
Melk, Salzburg, Regensburg (where we met up
with our friends Hroza and Josef); and over
the Rhine-Danube canal to Nuremberg,
Bamberg, Würzburg, Rüdesheim, Andernach,
Bonn and then Amsterdam where we
stayed four nights before returning home.