

MY LIFE STORY

Reverend John Philip Romeril, B.A., M.Div.

DEDICATION

To my wife ***Mary Ann***,
my faithful companion throughout
the calms and storms as we journeyed together
as the Spirit led us;

and to my family,
Philip, Catherine, Susan and Elizabeth,
that they remember some aspects of the life we shared
together.

Chapter One

THE EARLY YEARS, 1931-1939

I was born in the village of Ashby on the outskirts of Scunthorpe in Lincolnshire, England. The year was 1931 and the depression was in full swing. I was the third child and first son of the Reverend Philip Romeril and Isabella Lowe-Romeril. I had two older sisters, Isabel Mary, born in Port St Mary, Isle of Man in 1927, and Margaret Elizabeth, born in Snaith in 1929. I was named after my grandfather, Jean Philip Romeril, a Jersey man who, after the death of his first wife, married Eliza Donaghy, an Irish girl from Donegal. There were two children by the first marriage, a son who died in his early years, and a daughter Miriam whom I knew as Aunty Minnie Cockburn.

My father, a minister of the Methodist Church, had been transferred from Snaith to Scunthorpe in 1930. My memory of those first years is non-existent. However, photographs from that period and return visits after the war, along with family conversations about those years, bring to mind people who knew me then and places visited. Ruby was one who shared the child care with my mother in those years. The Arthur Jacksons, the Sidney Jacksons, the Mowsons and, of course, Mrs Bibby who ran a sweet shop on the high street in Ashby and who, along with Mrs Sid Jackson, have a special place in my memory.

My brother David James Romeril was born in March of 1934. When one reads of conditions in England during the depression and knowing the low salaries of clergy, I wonder how the family managed. But it was good preparation for the war years when we lived under German occupation for five years. But more of that later.

In 1935 Dad was transferred to the Nottingham circuit and worked with his superintendent at the Albert Hall, a large downtown church and with direct responsibility for Kings Hall in a different part of town. As a family we worshipped on Sunday mornings at Kings Hall and went to Sunday school in the afternoon at the Albert Hall.

It was at this point in my life that my memories become more concrete. Early on in our stay at Nottingham the young girl entrusted by my mother to look after David left without telling us. I suspect it must have been a Sunday when we were all at church, returning from worship to find baby David alone. Dad sent an S.O.S. to Scunthorpe, to one of the families he knew and Grace, a teenager, joined our family for the remaining years in Nottingham.

The manse we enjoyed in those years was a semi-detached house on Derby Road, number 272. It was a corner house. The street beside the house led to a large park, a place for walks and play. One of my earliest memories is of the lamplighter going down the street, lighting the gas lamps one by one. I enjoyed many outings with Grace – walks to Woolerton Park to see the deer, trips to Nottingham Castle and the museum there, walks along the Trent Canal and of course the annual visit to the Goose Fair where rides on the carousel and the dodgems were enjoyed, and ginger snaps were a treat at the end of the day.

I remember grocery shopping trips with my mother, sitting up on the long counter on which the quantities of flour, sugar, etc. were made up, and being given a cookie with icing figures on the one side as a treat for being good. The memory of watching mother bake and being allowed to lick out the bowls when she was finished, a habit I still like, that is, licking out the bowls.

At some point in our stay in Nottingham I had my first close shave. We were expecting the arrival of Uncle Jim from India. When a car stopped on the other side of Derby Road, I thought it was Uncle Jim. In my excitement I ran across Derby Road without looking both ways and was knocked down by a car, but fortunately was not seriously hurt.

The Manse was three storeys, as I remember it. There was a living room on the first floor to the left of the front door; behind it was the dining room with the kitchen to the right and a stairs going down to the basement. On the second floor there were two bedrooms and a bathroom. My parents had the front bedroom and my sister Mary had the second bedroom. There were two more bedrooms on the third floor. A small one in the attic as you came up the stairs, which was Grace's, and then a large attic-type room with a dormer window where the three of us slept. One of the tricks we played on Grace was spreading toothpaste over her pillow.

I remember when I was six, after being carefully instructed to heat the pot and pour boiling water over the tea and let it steep for five minutes, being allowed to make the Sunday morning pot of tea and carry it to my parents' room.

I remember the Christmas tree with little wax candles set on the branches which were lit on Christmas Day. I remember how stockings were allowed to be opened first thing on Christmas morning but the gifts under the tree had to wait until after the King had given his address to the nation at 3:00 pm on Christmas day, a habit followed in my own family's early years. The only Christmas gift that stands out in my memory was a cardboard chocolate bar machine in which you put a token and a chocolate bar popped out.

Then there were Guy Fawkes Days in the backyard when we were allowed to hold sparklers and pinwheels and let off a few rockets.

Sundays were always special days. At Kings Hall I sat with Mr and Mrs Parkes. He was an engine driver and every week he kept me amused during the sermon time bringing the picture sports cards that were found in cigarette packs. One of the special treats was to be able to go down to the railroad station and see Mr Parkes on his engine and climb aboard and for a while I was determined to be an engine driver when I grew up. Dad's children's stories under the general title of "John's Stories" were also very popular though the contents have long been forgotten.

It was in Nottingham that I went to the cinema for the first time. Elsie Roberts, one of the maiden ladies from the Church who was a friend of Grace's and used to join us for many outings, took me to see George Formby in *It's In the Air*. On another occasion we went to see one of Shirley Temple's early movies.

It was also in Nottingham that I started school, attending Ilkeston Road Public School which was only a couple of blocks from our home. I have no memory of teachers, fellow students, or curriculum. I do remember I hated art classes and being required to draw flowers in a vase which I found an impossible task. I remember working with raffia, a type of coloured straw, with which we made mats, one of which I gave to Aunty Em, my grandfather's housekeeper who still had it on her mantle when I went to visit her in 1946.

One Sunday school concert stands out in my memory. I was groomed by my mother to give a recitation, one of Christopher Robins' poems, *Has anyone seen my Mouse?* I remember stepping out on to the stage at the Albert Hall, which my memory tells me was huge, to face this huge sea of faces. I announced the title of my piece and then my mind went a complete blank. Of course the audience broke up. I have often thought that this experience was the reason why for any presentation I make in public I like to have a full script in front of me, even the words of a prayer like the Lord's Prayer.

Summer holidays were often memorable. One year we went to the Isle of Man where Dad had served as a probationer and where Mary had been born. This required a boat trip from Liverpool. I was not a good sailor. It was a rough crossing and I was seasick and, in one of my frequent trips to the rail, I accidentally dropped my teddy bear over the side. Another year I remember we went to Lanfancarn in Wales. We stayed in a boarding house along the sea front. Photos tell me that we had time on the beach but my memory tells me we had a lot of rainy days as well.

Then in 1937 Dad collapsed. His having been gassed in the First World War, on top of the damp climate, had so affected his lungs that an operation was necessary and he was given six months to live. I was packed off to stay with the Sidney Jacksons on their farm near Ashby. It was called Holm Hall. It was a mixed farm of about 250 acres. The dairy herd fed on the home paddock which had its own pond. They grew potatoes, sugar beets, oats, wheat and barley. There was a large flock of chickens that roamed the farm at will. There were ducks and geese in the farm pond. They kept bees and had an orchard with apples, pears, plums and damsons. I remember the rick yard in which the grain in its sheaves was stacked and then thatched to be threshed during the winter months when the steam thresher was available. The farm was without electricity. The milking was done by hand. Oil lamps were used in the kitchen and living room, a hurricane lantern was used when one visited the outdoor WC after dark, and a candle lit my way up the stairs to my bedroom and my feather bed. There was always a story at bedtime. Mrs Jackson was one of the special people in my life.

There were two boys in their family, identical twins Arthur and Gordon. In 1937 they must have been in their early teens and enjoyed teasing me. On one occasion they asked if I knew how to catch rabbits. Of course I said I didn't and then they told me to put salt on their tail which I proceeded to do as there were numerous rabbits in the home paddock. They were much amused to see me chasing the rabbits with a salt shaker! On another occasion they offered me a piece of chocolate which turned out to be Exlax.

One of my responsibilities while I was with them was egg boy. As such I spent many happy hours searching the stables, hay loft and rick yard for nests where the chickens who roamed loose tried to hide their eggs.

The work on the land was done mainly with horses. They had three teams of two of either Shires or Clydesdales. Occasionally I would ride out with one of the teams either in the cart or on the back of one of the horses. It was in these months away from home that I became convinced that farming was what I wanted to do when I grew up. A goal I didn't give up until some fifteen years later.

Fortunately the doctor's prognosis proved premature. Dad recovered and lived an active productive life until 1981. So in time I returned to Nottingham and life continued. The summer holidays of 1938 and 1939 were spent in Bexhill on Sea. We stayed in White Cottage on the outskirts of the town, but would spend the day at the beach and visits with Grandpa Lowe and Aunty Em, his housekeeper, who were living on Cooden Drive in Bexhill on Sea which was just a

block from the beach. It was during one of these visits that Grandpa gave us a two-wheel bicycle on which I learned to ride on our return to Nottingham.

We spent many happy hours building sand castles on the beach and then standing on them when the tide came in to see how long they would survive. Then as the tide went out we would catch shrimp in the pools around the pier, carry them back to the White Cottage and cook them for supper. I remember a mission group that used to build sand sculptures and conduct services and a kind of vacation bible school which we would attend. During one of these holidays my mother's brother, Jim Lowe, came for a visit from India and gave me a penknife. My mother was one of seven, a sister and five brothers, four of whom were in Canada and I was able to meet when I immigrated in 1950. Her sister Jessie I met after the war. When we left Bexhill after that holiday in 1939 none of us realized that it would be the last time we would see Grandpa Lowe alive.

I don't remember the year but the day came when Grace had a boyfriend whose name was Len Hardy. He worked for a feed merchant in the city and it wasn't long before I became his constant companion on Saturday mornings, sitting beside him on the dray behind the horse, as he delivered oats and bran to stables around the city. Eventually he married Grace and they had a daughter, Pamela. I visited this family after the war and have kept in touch with them over the years. Grace lives alone now, Len having died many years ago. She still keeps a beautiful garden in Nottingham and I enjoy talking with her about those days long ago.

It was time for another move and hopefully to a healthier climate. The Methodist Conference agreed to move us to the island of Guernsey in the English Channel just off the coast of France, in the bay of St Malo. We arrived on the Saturday and the following morning the news-stand across the street shouted the headlines that England had declared war on Germany.

Chapter Two

THE WAR YEARS, 1939-1945

The manse was a house with three storeys with a large garden at the front and rear. A low wall with an iron railing on top separated the front garden from the street, while a high wall separated the rear garden from the orchard behind us. The house was on New Road in St Sampson, which is the main road connecting St Sampson with St Peter Port, the main town on the island. Each community had its own harbor, St Sampson being mainly for the movement of coal into the island and Guernsey granite out. At low tide the freighters would sit high and dry on the mud, while St Peter Port was usable at all tides.

Guernsey is the second largest of the Channel Islands. Jersey, some 25 to 30 miles to the south, is the largest and was the home of my grandfather, Jean Philip Romeril. Alderney, to the northeast, is third in size. Sark, some ten miles to the east is number four, while Herm and Jethou, the last of the islands and the smallest, lie in between Guernsey and Sark.

Guernsey is some nine miles long and six miles wide and is in the shape of a triangle. The northern end is very flat, a rocky shore with a few beautiful sandy coves. Bordeaux has a small harbor for fishing boats. L'Ancrese Common borders a long curving sand beach. The Common boasts a golf course with narrow fairways, rough that contains gorse bushes and tethered Guernsey cows, Martello Towers as well as German bunkers. As you travel the coast road from the northern tip you head southwest past cove after cove but with a gradual rise to the land on your left till you arrive at Pleinmont and the cliffs which run along the south coast protecting the island from the gales that roar up the English Channel. The only way to really enjoy the southern shore is to walk the cliff path. From it you will experience majestic views of sea, rocks, breakers and a variety of coves with beautiful sandy beaches for swimming, especially at low tide. In spring time, which comes early in the Channel Islands, the cliffs are ablaze with colour – primroses, bluebells, wild roses, wild honeysuckle, campion and the yellow gorse.

In 1939 the economy of the island was centered in the growing industry. Greenhouses were everywhere and were called vineries. Tomatoes were the number one export crop and were shipped by the boatload from St Peter Port to the London market. On a smaller scale, grapes, figs and peaches were also grown under glass. As a child I remember thinking I had never seen such large peaches

and grapes, nor had I tasted such delicious fruit. Dairy cattle were also a big feature of island life.

By English standards the farms were small. The cows were tethered and usually milked in the field. Six or eight milking cows was fairly normal. The Guernsey cow was prized in those days for the high level of butter fat. Guernsey butter was a dark yellow, and delicious. There were no other breeds on the island and the export of cows around the world was big business. Many of the farms made their own butter, sold their milk locally door to door, had their own fruit and vegetables which they sold at the town market on a daily basis. It was on the Ogiers farm, the

Duveaux, on Baubigny, that I first saw and tried my hand at churning butter and experienced my first fresh fig. It was at the Blampied farm in later years that I spent many happy hours milking cows, feeding calves, chopping turnips to feed them, etc., and enjoying grapes in their season. But I am getting ahead of myself.

The manse was vastly different from anything we had experienced before. As you entered the front door, a massive staircase was on your right, rising from a hall beautifully tiled with ceramic tiles. On the left was the drawing room, a long room the full width of the house. A conservatory opened off the drawing room. At the end of the hall, as you entered the house, was a study. As you turned right down the hall you passed a large dining room and then came to the kitchen on the left which had a walk-in pantry, a large cooking stove with a rack suspended from the ceiling for airing clothes, and a back kitchen where a gas stove had been installed and where the laundry was done. At the end of the hallway was a WC and a door that led down into the basement. In the backyard was a separate building which housed a large copper that was used to heat water on wash days. Along the back wall were a couple of pear trees and area for vegetables.

There were four bedrooms on the second floor. The large one above the drawing room was my parents. The one over the dining room came to be Dorothy Brumby's. She came from Scunthorpe for a vacation in 1940 and for some reason unknown to me didn't leave in time to escape the German occupation. The small back bedroom was my sister Mary's, and the larger back bedroom was mine and David's. The only full bathroom in the house was at the head of the stairs as you reached the second floor. Hot water for baths was heated by gas in a geiser beside the tub. On the third floor was Margaret's bedroom and a large attic, with passages running down both sides under the eaves. This was our play area on rainy days. In the roof area over the bathroom was a large cistern which caught rain water.

It was an ideal location for the family. Across the street was a little store that sold sweets, newspapers and cigarettes. The Methodist Church was just three or four minutes' walk down the road, a stone's throw from the Bridge which was the commercial hub of St Sampson. At one time it had been an actual bridge connecting the north end of the island. Now, what once had been a swamp and tidal inlet is a thriving residential community. Around the bridge facing the inner harbor were a variety of shops, banks, and a pub. On the north side was the oil-fired electric generating station, on the south side of the harbor were warehouses and marine chandlers. Coal boats were unloaded by hand, the coal being shoveled from the ship's hold into large baskets which were then hoisted by ships' derricks and dumped into wagons on the quay.

It was a community in which everyone was known. Shopkeepers became personal friends, especially for the family of the local Methodist minister. There was R.H. Jones who ran the butcher shop, the Leales who ran the hardware store, Dorothy and Gladys Hall who ran a bakery, the Hibbs who ran a shoe store where I would go and watch him as he re-soled shoes, and the Hunkins who ran the marine chandlery.

The Methodist Church was large and was well attended. It had a large choir loft and a pump organ that was played for many years by Miss Edith Upson who also gave music lessons in her home. Harvest Festivals were especially memorable, with fruits of all description and vegetables decorating not only the communion table but along the rail of the choir loft and in every window recess. The congregation was warm and welcoming. It was made up of many of the local shop-keepers and vinery owners. The Leales, the Johns and the Doreys were among its leading families. The Doreys, Frank and Mona, Vic and Crissy, Martyn and Muriel, Ted and Dora, all became especially close as we shared the occupation years together. They were all of my parents' generation. Under the threat of German occupation they chose to send their children to England for safety. My relationship with their children was very brief, confined to our first few months on the island, an acquaintance to be renewed, especially with Bill in 1945 who taught me to sail in a sixteen foot sailboat called *Alison Belle*.

Behind the Church were several large rooms that were used for a Youth Club. This was where I attended Sea Scouts after the war and did my St John's Ambulance first aid course.

At some point during our first months on the island Grandma Romeril came to live with us. She moved into Dad's study on the ground floor. She was confined

to either a wheelchair or her bed. She had her meals in her room and wasn't to be disturbed by a lot of loud noises.

In those months of quiet, the lull before the storm, the routine of life continued. We got to know the various families. A boat trip to Herm with the Ted Doreys on the boat, the *Viking*, a beautiful sailboat they had built themselves. Visits to various beaches around the island all of which were accessible by bus and shanks' mare, for in those days we had no car. Of course there was school. The St Sampson Public school was just down the road from the Manse but, for some reason, we were sent to the Vale School which was a couple of miles away. We walked to and from school every day. I remember only two events from those few months in school, one was being part of a school band and learning to play an instrument like a triangle, and secondly playing the echo in a school production which included the song *Little Sir Echo How Do You Do*.

Spring comes early in Guernsey. Easter Monday has seen us cliffing with the youth club from the church. Swimming in the ocean was possible early in May. Haying was in full swing early in June. France fell on June 22nd. I remember being in a hay field on the Marchand's farm at Bordeaux – the moment is still clear in my memory – a clear sky and the sound of an airplane engine as a German observation plane cruised high in the sky. Then early on the evening of June 28th the sirens blared across the island and we took shelter in the hallway of the manse, yours truly on the stairs leading to the basement with my gas mask, and we heard in the distance the crump, crump of falling bombs.

Dad, fearing that the electric generating station might become a target, later that night took us out to a country manse. It was our first experience of war. Later we discovered that, although England had declared the islands an open town, i.e., not to be defended, the Germans mistook the lorries loaded with tomatoes for export on the White Rock as being war materials. Between thirty and forty died that night. The boy across the street, Peter LeFevre, was with his father on the docks and his father lay on top of him beneath a truck as the bombs fell and the trucks burned. They were two of the lucky ones who escaped with their lives.

It had been decided on June 19th by the States (Local Government) that all the children and any adults who wished should be evacuated to England as quickly as transport could be arranged. The Schools informed the children to bring one suitcase with them to school the next day and they left from school to the waiting boats, never realizing that it would be five long years before they would see their parents again. Dad, I believe over strong objections from Mother,

decided that his place was with his flock and that we children should stay with him. When the Germans arrived half the island's population of 40,000 plus had left, leaving home and possession behind them. The Island of Alderney was completely deserted, some people leaving breakfast on the table, just taking time to turn their animals loose before they left. Parents who followed their children, mothers especially, often took months to find their children in England. For those who remained behind life was radically changed.

On June 30th the Germans landed at the airport and the occupation was underway. Prior to their arrival all money was collected from the banks and sent to England to prevent it falling into enemy hands. In due time the civilian government began printing its own occupation money, which was in use along with German marks until liberation, and also its own postage stamps. The Guernsey Press continued to publish under German censorship. Through it the orders of the occupying powers were communicated to the population – such things as curfew, the turning in of all fire arms, the eventual turning in of radios, the issuing of German identification cards and ration books.

German troops occupied the Public School at the end of our street along with several other buildings. Homes were confiscated for living quarters where and when they pleased. We gradually became accustomed to the sound of marching jackboots, military traffic which included horses and carts as well as motorized vehicles and the ever present olive green uniforms.

With the loss of many leading citizens the local government had to be re-organized. A variety of committees was set up. The Emergency Controlling Committee was the key. One of the first concerns was to ensure that all young men of military age had a job so there could be no excuse for shipping them out as slave labourers. Dad was asked to serve on the Labour Committee under the chairman Dick Johns. One of his first tasks I remember him telling us about was to take a work party to Alderney to see what supplies they could rescue for we knew that the island would need everything they could lay their hands on to survive. Dr Brosche of the Feldkommandantur went with them. As they were going up the long hill leading to the town of St Anne, Dr Brosche had a nose-bleed. Dad told him to sit on the step of a house and helped him off with his leather belt to which his holster and pistol were attached. As he did so a Nazi soldier, obviously believing that his superior officer was being attacked, appeared aiming his rifle at Dad. Fortunately Dr Brosche, realizing what was happening, ordered the man to hold his fire.

Some time during the first few months someone had given us two Dutch Rabbits. A hutch was built in the outhouse in the back yard. When we first received this gift we never realized how valuable they would be. They bred frequently and soon we had several hutches and had to move them into the empty garage. As food shortages increased they became a source of meat for our table. All basic foods were rationed. We were allowed 3 oz of meat per person per week, if it was available which was seldom. We were allowed 4 oz of butter per person per week. We each had our own pat. I divided mine into 7 equal portions, one for each day of the week. Children got a special allowance of one pint of full cream milk per day. The rabbits were under the care of Margaret and me. This involved cleaning out the hutches and gathering food every day which involved scouring the countryside for the type of plants rabbits like.

By September the school system had been reorganized. Most of the regular teachers had left with their classes so there was recruiting throughout the community of anyone who was willing to give teaching a try. All school buildings had been taken over by the troops so alternative facilities had to be found for the few children that were left. The Vale Methodist Church made its Sundayschool room available for a school in the north end of the island. There were only two families on our street with children, the Bougourds who had two, Nancy and John, and ourselves. John Bougourd and I became bosom pals throughout the occupation though he was a little older. Initially we all went to the Vale Church School. Mrs Gale, who ran a corner store in Bordeaux where she still lives (1998), was the headmistress and taught among other things mathematics. There was a Mrs Bisson who taught French. I had a terrible time with this language and was in her bad books constantly for which I was made to sit with the girls! There was a man who taught English and for whom we had to learn one of the Psalms every week.

Today the St Sampson Methodist Church and the Vale Methodist Church have united to form St Paul's Methodist Church in the former Vale Church buildings. In 1998 I had the privilege of preaching there and experiencing once again the facilities we had used as children. Some of my fellow students are still there. Faces have changed but memories hold fast. Harry Mauger, a few years older than I, will be remembered for the help he gave me in mathematics. Tommy Marquand and his sister Sheila, the Gale girls and Daphne Brehaut are some of those I remember as part of the occupation crowd.

I moved on to the Intermediate School in September of 1942. At this time the school was meeting in a Roman Catholic facility, Notre Dame de Rosarie, in

Burnt Lane in St Peter Port. Peter Girard was the principal. Aubrey Green took us for mathematics. He was a conscientious objector and had been sent to the island to harvest crops as an alternative to military service. Miss Brett taught us English. Miss Moon took us for geometry. Mr Broughton was our bookkeeping teacher. We also had classes in history, geography and German and French. The Nuns who had previously run the school and who lived next door, served us soup for lunch. We rode bicycles to and from school every day, some 3-4 miles. They were left in a store front at the foot of the hill below the school. In the same area there was a blacksmith shop where, after school, we could watch horses being shod. We enjoyed a full athletic program with field hockey, soccer and gymnastics. The gym team, under the coaching of Ernie Rault and of which I was a member, put on a display at the end of the school term in 1945.

It was also in the fall of 1942 that the Germans decreed that all English-born residents should be deported to Germany. This should have included our family. We were rather excited about the prospects of going to Biberach in South Germany near the Black Forest. However the Germans agreed to allow one of the Methodist ministers to stay. Rev Flint went and we stayed.

I think it was some time in 1941 that mother became ill. Goats' milk was decreed as being helpful for her. Dorothy Higgs, who had several goats, loaned us one for the duration. Her name was Daisy and she became my responsibility. To house her at the manse required the building of a small shed which was done with corrugated iron and the help of Frank Martel. One day while working on the shed my sister Mary was practising on the violin and he suggested to me that I should take the oil can up to her to stop the squealing. As you can imagine, it was not appreciated by my sister. As time went on, in order to keep the milk flowing, Daisy was bred and then we had two goats. I think she had twins as I remember being quite upset when it appeared on the dinner table. But meat was in short supply.

In order to conserve fuel we built a hay box. It was like a trunk, filled with hay with two depressions to hold pots. The oats for our morning porridge would be brought to the boil and then the pot put in the hay box overnight. In the morning our porridge would be ready.

As the months became years supplies became scarce. We were allowed 2 oz of butter per person per week, 3-1/2 oz of meat per person per week when available and 2 oz of sugar per week. Children were allowed 1 pint of full cream milk per day while the adults were allowed half a pint of skim per day. Bread was also rationed, 3-1/2 lbs per person per week. Fish such as mackerel and whiting

were sometimes available depending on whether any fisherman had escaped to England recently. If they had, the fishing was closed down. A few of the essential things were imported from France, if and when our buyers could find them over there. We were expected to be as self-sufficient as possible. When salt ran out we took a bucket to the ocean and used sea water for cooking. When there was no more jelly powder we gathered carrageen moss from the beach, dried it and then used it to make a form of jelly. We also gathered limpets and winkles from the rocks at low tide for cat food. A Mr Le Tissier loaned us a field where we planted beans. We dried them in the conservatory and shelled them to have a supply of dried beans for the winter which we used to make Guernsey bean jar (baked beans) or bean cake. In the spring early tomatoes were plentiful for the first couple of years as the growers, expecting the end of the war, planted with that in mind, but of course it didn't happen. There was little money to be had and the congregation was small so I think Dad was paid not so much in cash as in produce which meant that at least we were fed. Though there came a period when rutabagas (orange turnip) were the main item for breakfast, lunch and supper. Sugar beets were also boiled and pressed and the juice boiled, reducing it to a thick black syrup.

As a child I was not aware of the seriousness of our situation and after the first air raid and the fear associated with it, came to take danger as a fact of life and by and large ignored it. I slept through numerous air raids. I would go down to the sea front at Richmond Corner and watch the Allies strafe shipping waiting to enter St Peter Port harbor. We went swimming in Belle Grave Bay using the mined tripods, there to prevent landing craft using the bay, as a diving platform. There was the occasional close shave. On one occasion we had been swimming in the salt water pool beneath Fort George when Mosquito bombers came in low over the island dropping bombs on the Fort and strafing Castle Cornet. As we left the pool on the run cannon shells began to hit the water. Afterwards we stopped to pick up shrapnel and shell casings before heading home.

We also did what in hindsight were some very stupid things, like trying to make carbide bombs; emptying shell casings of their powder and putting a match to it; bombarding German soldiers with lumps of mud from behind a high wall; picking up leaflets dropped from allied planes and distributing them at school; sneaking up a field to see what a group of Germans were up to, only to discover that we were in the target area when they started throwing hand grenades; going cliffing only to discover that we had wandered into a supposedly mined area.

Sometime in 1942 the Germans became concerned about their own security and so our side of the street was taken over so they could surround it with barbed wire. This meant a move out of the manse and into someone's empty house. We moved to Maison de Haut. It had once been an old farm house which had been expanded into a very nice home with a large walled garden and a field beside it. It had a number of outbuildings, so a ready-made facility for our rabbits and goats. It had a billiard room with a huge stone fireplace. The whole place seemed huge, including my bedroom which was over the kitchen. However, on walking by the house in 1989, it was again under renovation and we were permitted to look around. It did not seem nearly as big as my memory was telling me it was.

It was a wonderful garden with apple, pear, peach and pomegranate trees, flowers in abundance, a bank covered with primroses in the spring and a wooded area below a high wall where John B. and I built a camp and spent many happy hours at play. It came with a gardener in residence. He had his own cottage next door to the house. The house was owned by Colonel Walters who had left before the Germans arrived. The gardener was also Walters, but no relation. His son had been evacuated and was in Canada.

The house holds many memories. It was here that mother's illness became terminal. I will never forget seeing her grow thinner and thinner, unable to keep any food down, her skin becoming jaundiced. Finally she was hospitalized. I rode my bicycle out to the hospital regularly until she died in February 1943. I remember sitting in the tower area, which was a corner of her bedroom, with my brother and sister, completely heartbroken.

But it was also in the yard of this house where I first heard my name called. I remember running in asking who had called but no-one had, and no-one offered any explanation. Years later, when I read the Biblical story of Samuel, I recognized that God had placed His hand on my life at the age of 12.

It was here that Herr Fry, a German pastor, forced into the army, came to visit us. I remember one Christmas he brought a transparent card of the nativity scene which was placed on a table and a candle lit behind it and then he played his flute as we sat in the light of the fire and the one candle and sang Christmas carols in English and German.

It was in the living room of this house where Dad held his local preacher's classes and I would sneak in and sit behind the couch and listen to the discussions.

It was in my bedroom at night, with my bed drawn across the window, that I would watch the stars, name them, and also review the pressure points which I was learning in a First Aid class.

It was from behind the wall near our camp that I would observe the slave workers living in the State houses. Thousands of them had been brought to the island by the Todt Organization to build the fortifications that soon turned the island into a fortress, part of Hitler's Atlantic Wall. They were in rags, their feet wrapped in rags. Doors and window frames were torn apart to use as firewood to cook whatever scraps of food they could scrounge. Many died.

I remember that we had no coal or coke for the Aga cooker in the kitchen. This necessitated the building of what we called a terpieds in one of the outbuildings. This consisted of bricks or blocks on three sides with a sheet of metal on top. The fire was built under the metal sheet. This was not the traditional way, but it served our purpose. We burned anything we could get our hands on. I remember gathering dry cow dung, mixing tar with coal dust, among other things.

Up the road from this house was a building that had been used for roller skating. We would have great fun tearing around the empty building, even giving a try at hockey with a tennis ball and our field hockey sticks. I think it was during the time at this house that I had my second attack of appendicitis. This put me in the cottage hospital and I was operated on. At the time I did not understand the seriousness of this operation. Since having read a book by a nurse who served during this period in that very hospital and learning of children who had died of the very same thing because there were no antibiotics, I feel very fortunate to have come through that experience. I was kept in bed for a month. For part of that time my bed was moved out onto a large verandah. Nurse Madelaine Tanguay looked after me. It was puppy love but very special. On discharge from hospital I was not allowed to participate in any sporting activities for three months. It was during this recuperation period that I went to Martyn Dorey's at Belstone where Mrs Dorey, who was a dietician, cooked me a special dish of fish roe. They also had a record player and I would listen to Gracie Fields singing *Jerusalem*. Mrs Dorey had a potter's wheel and made a variety of articles. It was here that I remember meeting the local vet and, for a brief time, thought that I too might like to be one.

We also had a weekly dinner date with Vic and Crissy Dorey who became a very special couple in the life of our family. This was on a Sunday. As we walked

the lane connecting the New Road to the Route Militaire I remember talking with Margaret about where we might be ten, twenty years down the road.

It was here that we saw the armada of Allied aircraft heading for France on June 6th. We could hear the shelling and the bombing, the coast of France being only 30 miles away. Our clandestine radio informed us that D. Day was under way and we all wondered when there might be landings on the island. But fortunately for us the Allies chose to ignore the islands.

Then the day came when the Germans began building a gun emplacement across the street. They of course then needed the house we were in for the crew. So another move, this time we moved to La Hauteur, another lovely home in its own large grounds, on a hill with a view of Herm and Jethou, just a stone's throw from the Vale Methodist Church. Here we had a good stand of trees on the property, so a ready source of firewood which had to be collected every day after school.

Now we were completely cut off from all sources of supplies. Fuel to run the electrical generators was finished in the fall of 1944. We made a fuel cell to run a flashlight battery to have a little light. A neighbor, Norman Patten, who had a crush on my sister Margaret, made her a crystal set, so once again we could hear the BBC news and keep track of events. Before Christmas there was no more flour, so no bread, no sugar. Vegetables if you grew them.

One night someone broke into our garage which housed our rabbits and stole the lot. From then on the goats were brought into the house every night and kept in the downstairs bathroom. This meant mucking out every morning before school. I remember planting carrot tops as we had no seed, and potato peelings to grow more which they did, providing there was an eye in the piece of peeling. As fuel for cooking was growing scarcer we took whatever dish we were able to prepare to the bakery which ran a communal oven. Ours was usually some form of beans. The Red Cross was prepared to deliver food supplies but Churchill wouldn't allow them as he believed the Germans would have confiscated whatever was sent for their own use and he wanted to starve them into surrender. Eventually he gave in and the Vega arrived with the first load of flour and Red Cross parcels. The first Red Cross parcel was delivered on December 31st 1944, half a box per person in February and two boxes per person in March and again in April. Ours came from Canada. It contained a can of butter, a can of powdered milk, chocolate, bacon, jam, cheese, tea, a tin of Kam, a tin of corned beef, one tin of sardines and a tin of salmon, a package of prunes, a package of hard crackers, salt and pepper, and soap. The ones from New Zealand were a little

different. They contained condensed milk, honey, cheese, raisins, Café au Lait, chocolate, jam, corned mutton, tea, dried peas, lamb and peas, butter, and sugar. I remember going down to Lang's Bakery to get our first loaves of pure white bread, at the beginning of March.

By now bicycle tires had long since disappeared and were replaced by garden hose. Leather soles for shoes had been replaced by wooden ones. Tea was replaced by dried blackberry leaves or dried carrot shavings. Coffee had been replaced by ground acorns. Tobacco for the ardent smokers had been replaced by dried cabbage leaves or, in my father's case, the dried rose petals that had been on my mother's dresser – at least they smelt better when burning than dried cabbage leaves. Real tea and cigarettes were special treats with the arrival of Red Cross supplies.

It was probably in 1943 or '44 that I took a St John's Ambulance Course from a Mr Lowe, learning how to splint an arm and a leg, make a sling, as well as learning the pressure points and how and when to apply a tourniquet.

By now there was no doubt that the war was about to end. But when Germany surrendered the local Commandant announced he would fight to the end. On May 8th from our house we could see through the misty dusk the navigation lights of British warships waiting offshore. At daybreak on May 9th I left the house on my bicycle for the White Rock where we expected the Tommies to land, giving no thought to the possibility that the Germans might put up a fight. The feeling one experienced as we saw the first platoon of the Green Howards marching down the quay was indescribable. After five years of occupation to be once again free! It was a memorable day, never to be forgotten.

One of my final memories of the last weeks at the Intermediate School was of an athletic display in which I participated, which culminated in our building a human pyramid.

Sometime that summer I wrote entrance examinations for Kingswood School, a Methodist Boarding School in England. Having missed a fair amount of schooling, especially in the sciences, it was thought that a boarding school was the best option to get caught up in my schooling. So at the beginning of September I boarded the mail boat for Southampton, alone, to begin the next stage of my education.

Chapter Three

THE KINGSWOOD YEARS, 1945-1949

I say I went on my own, but I am not sure. I don't remember that first trip to Kingswood. I may have travelled part way with my sister Margaret who was heading for a similar school in Southport, Lancs. But I think I must have gone first to Ashby and spent part of the summer on the farm at Holm Hall as I remember having to go to Franklin's, the tailor, on the High Street to be measured for a pin-striped suit which was a requirement at Kingswood.

Kingswood's home was Bath but, owing to war-time needs of the Admiralty to get out of London, the school had been evacuated to Uppingham where we shared facilities with Uppington Public School, a very upper-crust boarding school.

Uppingham is a small rural town in the smallest county in England, Rutland. It is neither on a main highway nor main railroad line, though I am sure it must have been on a branch line in those days. It has changed little in fifty years. It is astride the A6003 just south of the A47. I vaguely remember arriving at the house where we were to live in the twilight of a foggy, damp September evening and being warmly greeted by the housemother and the boys I was to share the next four years of my life with in Middle House. Mr Ingram was our house master. I remember him as a rather austere individual who took a very dim view of high-jinks in the dorm, especially such things as pillow fights. Our house was south of Uppingham on the A6003. Meals were served in the dining room at the school and of course all classes were at the main school in the middle of Uppingham.

I was in the fourth form and our classroom was on the second floor of a low two-storey building covered with ivy. Our desks as I recall were long wooden ones at which several students could sit and they were covered in carved initials of many past generations of students. Opposite our building was a row of study rooms belonging to the Uppingham prefects. The dining hall was on another side of the quadrangle as was the large assembly hall where I remember sitting in agony, initially, to listen to classical concerts. The one artist I remember was Isabel Baillie. However this exposure no doubt was a major contributing factor for my lifetime enjoyment of classical music.

In my first term rugby football was the sport. We attended school matches *en masse*. This was my first exposure to the game which I came to thoroughly enjoy. Field hockey was the sport for the second term which ran from January to April. One of the highlights of each term was a day free from classes which the

headmaster would announce at morning assembly. A bag lunch could be picked up after assembly and we were turned loose on the surrounding countryside. I remember walking down to Rockingham, six or seven miles to the south, exploring the village and the castle and, of course, being back before dark.

Christmas 1945 saw the family gather in Ashby. I stayed with Mrs Bibby who had the sweet shop on High Street. Margaret was at the Mowsons but I don't remember where the rest stayed. This was to be the last Christmas that the four of us were to spend together.

The beginning of the third term saw us return to Bath and settling in to the regular school buildings. The school lies to the north of the main centre of Bath, close to the top of Lansdowne on which the school playing fields were situated. The main building was in the form of an E. On one end of the E was the dining hall, above which was the dormitory for Hall House; at the other end of the E was the assembly hall and above it was the dorm for School House. The centre block contained the headmaster's office and the Sackett's apartment in the tower above. The middle of the E held three dorms, Upper, Middle and Lower House. Each House had its own set of common rooms, a junior and a senior. On the south side of the quadrangle was the library, on the west side was the carpentry shop and beyond it a classroom block. The gym was on the north side of the complex and backed onto a road that ran the length of the property. On it was Westwood, the prep school, and a number of houses occupied by the teachers. The road ended at a farmer's gate which I eventually explored and so met the Ford family with whom I eventually spent many happy hours milking cows and feeding calves in the late afternoon before the supper hour. This family was still there when I revisited the school in 1988.

There was a long covered passageway leading from the dining room to the dorm area. Every boy had a cubby hole in this corridor where shoes were kept. They were cleaned every day by one person on the staff.

The dorms were long rooms, one on either side of a central tower which contained washrooms and showers. The beds were lined up along the wall on either side of the dorm, with a small cubicle at the head of each bed which contained a wash-hand basin. At the end of the dorm was a master's room. The dorms were not heated and there was no hot water in our cubicles. The dorms had a very high ceiling with tall windows along both sides. In winter it could be pretty cold. I think by the second year I had been moved into the senior dorm. John Mundin had the bed on one side and Peter Wood had the bed on the other.

We followed a set routine. We were up by 7:00 a.m. Breakfast was followed by Chapel and then morning classes till 12:00 noon. In the afternoons there were compulsory sports. Then classes again from four till six, three days a week. After supper it was prep time. Bedtime was nine p.m. In the fall term everybody played rugby. We were assigned to a team no matter one's skill at the game. The aim for some of us was to improve our skills so that we would be chosen to represent the school on either the Third, Second or First Fifteen. Each school team had a schedule that included some away games. By the fall of 1948 I had made it to the First Fifteen and won my half colours. J.R. Rawlings was our hooker, I was a second row forward and Peter Wood was a fly half. A similar pattern was followed in each of the three terms, though I never made any of the other school teams. I enjoyed field hockey which I had played in Guernsey, and chose tennis over cricket in the third term. I enjoyed watching cricket but did not have the reflexes. My chum, John Mundin, was a good cricketer and when he made opening bat for the First Eleven I often tagged along as the official scorer. The third term also involved inter-House field days. I learned to throw the discus, the javelin, and shot put. We ran 100-yard dash, the 220 and 440. We tried hurdles, high jump and long jump, none of which I excelled at.

I studied the full range of courses – Maths, Chemistry, Physics, English, French, Geography, Botany, History, Carpentry and Religious Knowledge. Rev Rupert Davies was our Chaplain and taught RK. It was only on reading his obituary in the Kingswood Magazine that I realized the influence his teaching had on my life.

Sunday there was always a full chapel service for which we all learned to chant the Psalms. This was a big surprise as I had thought only Anglicans did that, but then discovered that John Wesley, the founder of the school, had been a staunch Anglican until the day he died. It was only after his death that Methodism separated itself completely from the Anglican Church.

During my time at Kingswood we celebrated the 200th anniversary of the founding of the school. A large marquee was set up in the quad in which the various events connected with the celebration were held. The quad was also the place where we had our mid-morning exercise classes.

Every term there would be a number of concerts by great artists. There would also be days picked at random for rambling in the countryside. Sometimes a visiting lecturer or musician, knowing this tradition, would ask the head to grant an extra one. Wells was one of my favourite destinations. We would walk on the

river bank there and back, sometimes stopping at a pub for a glass of cider if we were sure no-one from the school was around.

It was in Bath that I saw my first ballet, Saddlers Wells performing Swan Lake. Downtown movie houses were out of bounds, however that did not stop the occasional visit, making sure that our school cap was out of sight and no-one from the school was in sight.

There was a girls' boarding school down the road from us. However there was no fraternizing allowed. We would watch them play hockey and lacrosse as their playing fields were next to ours.

I joined the Boy Scouts. Mr Milne was the Scout Master and also taught English. I eventually made Patrol Leader. In the third term we usually had a camping weekend. This entailed loading up the trek cart, a two-wheeled vehicle with a long tongue which we would pull some miles until we found a farmer who would allow us to camp. Setting up camp was done by patrols. Each patrol had its own tent, a bell tent. A kitchen area had to be set up with a cooking fire and the manufacturing of whatever additional articles that might be useful. A latrine had to be dug. Then there would be inter-patrol competitions ending in the judging of the best camp site. Occasionally we would camp with the district scouts for a small Jamboree.

The winter of 1946 was memorable. We had an unbelievable snow storm which piled the snow in the narrow lanes around the back of Lansdowne until you could touch the telephone wires. We were able to make cardboard toboggans and toboggan in the Fords' field at the back of the school. It was so cold that the water froze in our cubicles in the dorm.

In the spring of 1948 I wrote the Oxford and Cambridge School Certificate. This I managed to pass, except for French. This of course meant that I was ineligible for University entrance, so there was no point in my continuing to study for the Higher Certificate. The Head suggested that I study French and try again, but that the rest of my study time could be spent in the Library reading. Thus I was able to read all of Dickens, Tolstoy, Churchill and many others. I tried the French again but again failed. It was during this final year that I met Angela. We walked the fields above Lansdowne on many an afternoon. We talked, about what I don't know, and though seen by a prefect in my house we were not reported.

In the summer of 1947 Dad re-married. Elaine Hibbs whose family had run the telephone exchange on Brock Road in Guernsey and whose father had the

shoe store on the bridge, became my step-mother, she was a little older than Mary my eldest sister. It came as a big surprise to me.

Summers I often spent at Holm Hall. Going home for Christmas or Easter was always a traumatic experience as there was no way to avoid the boat trip. It seemed that it was always rough, especially around the Casquets and I would spend the night on deck feeding the fish. Following the wedding we all went to Jersey for a few days and then Dad and Elaine and David left for Nassau in the Bahamas where Dad served the Methodist Church, Ebenezer Church on Shirley Street.

Having the Guernsey connection proved financially beneficial. The cook and housekeeper at school were both smokers. Guernsey was a duty-free island. Travelers could bring into England 200 cigarettes a trip. So I would buy them duty-free and sell them to the cook, making a little extra pocket money. This was important as my allowance was one shilling a week, half of which went into the Sunday offering. It also gave me an *entre* to Sunday Evening gatherings in the Housekeeper's room for *café au lait* and extra eats.

When traveling to Ashby or Guernsey via London I would stop off for a few days and stay with Aunty Jess in Surbiton, a few minutes' ride on the tube from central London. This enabled me to see some of the great London shows, such as *Annie Get Your Gun*, *Brigadoon* and *Oklahoma*. When I traveled via Weymouth, which was a shorter boat trip, I would stay overnight with Richard Waterman's family who were farmers just north of the town. There I rode my first motor cycle. I occasionally visited John Munding's family in Northampton and spent a last summer holiday with them in the fishing village of Portloe in Cornwall. When I returned to Guernsey after 1947 I stayed with John Bougourd's family who lived just down the road from the manse. John was working as an apprentice in the marine engineering field. So days were spent on my own but evenings and weekends we planned double dates, etc. I spent time cliffing, walking at L'Ancrese, visits to Herm and Sark, activities I still like to do when I return there. One summer I went to Jersey for the Great Jersey Road Race. Another summer I borrowed a pup tent from the Scouts at school and hitch-hiked from Ashby north to Scotland, visiting Edinburgh, on to Balmoral, over the Devil's Elbow, out to Aberdeen and then on to Inverness, Glasgow and south back to Ashby.

As my school days drew to a close the question was what was I going to do with my life. My dream for many years had been to farm. But how? I was penniless. A degree in agriculture was, I thought, a possible entry into the field but, without French, I could not attend a college in England. My Headmaster, Mr

Sackett, suggested that I emigrate to Canada where I might find a more hospitable climate.

When I made that decision it seemed like cutting all ties with England. Financially, a return trip, I believed, would be out of the question. I have, in recent years, wished that I had kept in touch with some of my school chums. So I said goodbye to the folk in Guernsey and in Ashby, and took the train to Liverpool where I spent my last few days with Aunty Minnie who introduced me to some of the Donnaghy relatives, and then I sailed on the *Reina del Pacifico* for Nassau and a visit with Dad and Elaine before heading for Canada.

Chapter Four

IMMIGRATION, 1949-1951

On route to Nassau we stopped first at La Rochelle in France, then Santander in Spain, and finally Bermuda. I went ashore at the first two ports of call but by the time we reached Bermuda my money was gone. We anchored offshore and those wishing to go ashore went by tender. During the trip I met a number of people including the Bilinskis who were also going to Nassau. He had been a fighter pilot in the Polish squadron during the war.

The manse in Nassau was on Shirley Street just across the road from Ebenezer Methodist Church. It was open and airy. I had a back bedroom overlooking the garden where Dad kept some chickens. Elaine worked in town and there was a maid who did the cleaning and cooking. Dad had arranged for me to get a job at Pan American Airways as a traffic clerk. This involved dealing with the customers at the front desk, booking flights and making up tickets. I played some soccer and rugby for Nassau as British Naval vessels visited from time to time and wanted a game.

David went to the local Methodist school in Nassau. Through him I met the Rose family. They lived on Hog Island, now known as Paradise Island. Mr Rose was the head gardener for the Killam Estate. This gave me access to one of the nicer beaches in the area as, in those days, Hog Island was all private. David also had a 14-foot sailboat in which we did some sailing around Hog Island.

One of my memories is connected with Christmas. The congregation had a money tree, like our Christmas tree. The members of the congregation put a money gift on the tree for the pastor, a very useful custom at a time when salaries were small and the cost of living high.

Dad was also responsible for the communities on some of the out-islands. I remember traveling with him on one of the inter-island steamers to Staniard Creek on the Island of Andros. It was an overnight trip and the cabin had a number of large cockroaches. Dad not only conducted services while there but also ran a medical-dental clinic which included pulling teeth. There was a lovely sandy beach and good swimming.

In April of 1950 I took the plane to Miami and then travelled by bus to Montreal via New York. I had a stop-over in New York and stayed at the YMCA. Crossing the border into Canada they simply stamped my passport "Landed Immigrant". Arriving in Montreal I visited the CPR offices. They had an agricultural

office. They sent me to work for a farmer near Ormstown, Everret Forrester. He had a 120-acre dairy farm and worked co-operatively with his two brothers, Tom who lived across the road and Clarence who lived on the same concession but closer to Ormstown. I learned to handle the milking machine. I fed the cattle hay and molasses. I helped strip down an old Fordson tractor and get it in working condition. I painted storm windows, dug the trench to bring water into the house, forked loose hay in the hay mow, tossed corn sheaves onto the wagon to take to the silo and tramped silage in the silo. I worked from dawn to dark for \$40 a month plus room and board.

The Forresters were Presbyterians so I sometimes worshipped with them and sometimes went to the United Church. Social life was non-existent. Being several miles from town and having no transportation it was either shanks' mare or hitching a ride. I think I had one date in that period and for it I had to take Tom's younger brother along as he had a car. There were occasional concession get-togethers at a hall but they were few and far between.

My goal in coming to Canada had been to attend McDonald College to obtain a degree in agriculture and then perhaps become an Ag Rep. By September I had saved \$250 but felt that this was not sufficient to see me through the winter in Montreal. Then it was brought to my attention that if I was going to stay around I needed wheels and there just happened to be a '29 Nash coupe with a rumble seat that was available for \$250. Guess what? I became the proud owner of that '29 Nash. I bought it and drove it to the licensing bureau and bought my driver's license for \$1.

During this period I was involved with a Youth Group at the United Church. I also sang in the choir. I attended a youth rally in Montreal, hitching a ride up on the morning milk truck. There I heard the Principal of the Theological College, Dr Kilpatrick, speaking about the call to ministry in the United Church. But I told myself no way. If he had talked about Agricultural Missions he might have had a recruit.

As winter closed in Everett told me that he couldn't afford to pay me wages for the winter. I was welcome to stay on to do the chores for room and board. I was offered two other jobs by local farmers for more money than I had been getting (\$70 a month, in fact), one who had two unmarried daughters and no sons, and one who lived closer to town. But I decided against staying in Ormstown. I put my car up on blocks in Clarence's wagon shed and headed into Montreal. I caught the bus for Miami, once again with a stop-over in New York,

and then flew from Miami to Nassau and took my old job with Pan American Airways.

By this time Dad had had to leave Nassau owing to his insistence on integrating the Methodist School over the protests of the white parents. So I boarded with the Bilinskis. I returned to my job at PanAm. It wasn't long before Mr Bilinski moved from the hotel in which he was working to another and offered me his old job as steward at the Balmoral Beach club. I jumped at the chance.

I used my Quebec driver's license to get a Nassau one and I was in business. My job was, in cooperation with the chef, to order all the food that was to be consumed in the dining room. Fruit and vegetables came from the local market and meat usually from Miami. I had a little van with which I picked up supplies in Nassau. One of the families I got to know were the Millers from Cleveland. They had a steel business. I did some touring of the island, including the night spots, with Mr Miller.

I usually worked the early morning hours until after lunch, then I had a few hours off and was on duty again when preparation began for the evening meal, and I would be there until the dining room closed. The Club was a series of bungalows which were rented as units, meals being served in the main dining room. The centerpiece each evening was an ice sculpture made by the pastry chef.

However, when April rolled around, I again headed for Miami, New York and Montreal with a brief side trip to Cleveland and a visit at the Millers' mansion. This time I was sent to work for R.F. McCreary near Smiths falls in Ontario. So I picked up my car from Clarence, drove to Smiths Falls and located the farm on the Merickville Road near the Kilmarnock locks. Here I worked with Bob McCreary, the son. His brother Bruce was still in school. R.F. gave the orders and sometimes worked with us but was usually busy about county Conservative Party business.

Again it was a dairy farm. The haying, silo filling and grain harvesting were done cooperatively with a number of other farmers along the concession. Our day began early, 5:30 a.m. the cows had to be brought in and then milked and the milk set in a stream that flowed through the milk house. R.F. took it to the dairy in town every morning after breakfast. The price depended on demand on that particular day. If the demand was light some of it would have to go to the cheese factory for a much lower price. Thus income was not steady.

Bob and I worked well together, our only difference of opinion came over his seeking to kill the young pigeon nestlings in the barn. We even considered seriously my buying the next-door neighbour's farm when he retired, and my

beginning my dream of a prize herd of Guernsey cows. But I was only earning \$70 a month. The dream seemed like an impossibility. At the same time I was becoming deeply involved in the United Church in Smiths Falls. Carmen Armstrong was the minister. I sang in the choir, taught Sundayschool, was an active member of the Young People's Union, attended prayer meetings on Wednesday night. I had changed my '29 Nash for a little more modern Ford product. But I still had no clear picture of the future. So I left the farm and moved into town and worked for Cockshut Farm Machinery. There I learned to use a drill press. When I was layed off there I moved over to Falls Manufacturing, a maker of office desks and filing cabinets. There I learned to spot weld, use a metal press, and metal cutting machine. Then it was back to Cockshut for a while and then back to Falls Manufacturing. Neither company employed me long enough to get enough stamps in my unemployment insurance book so that I could draw any benefits. I earned 75 cents an hour. My take home pay was, I think, \$38. Twenty dollars went for room and board. I was not getting ahead very fast. It was during this time in Smiths Falls that the United Church's Division of Evangelism under Dr Berry organized a National Crusade with Charles Templeton as the evangelist. He came to Smiths Falls and, like a lot of other young people, we fell under his spell. On youth night we all went forward and made a commitment.

During this period I had made contact with my Uncle Fred who lived in St Catherines as well as my Uncle Arthur who lived in Toronto. It was a period of uncertainty. I still thought I wanted to be related to farming in some way but I saw no way of getting there. I had toyed with the idea of joining the railroad, also with applying at Avro. My contact with Uncle Fred, who was a chemical engineer, led me to consider that as a possibility as well. It was at this period of my life that I was dating Shirley, a member of our Youth Group. She attended the Free Methodist Church which we often attended Sunday evenings. Carmen Armstrong often spoke to me about considering Ministry but I really didn't think that I had the gifts this required. I often felt the people raised the possibility simply because I was raised in a manse. I was a P.K., therefore it should be like a duck taking to the water.

This was also a time when I was constantly hearing a voice. It pounded in my head through the noise of the machines I worked on. It was persistent and disturbing. It told me that I was to go to into ministry. But that was the last thing in the world I wanted to do.

So I eventually decided to apply to Queen's University to enter the Engineering Faculty and study for a degree in Chemical Engineering. I was

accepted. Then in August of 1952 I attended a Youth Rally at Carlton Place. Our group was responsible for the worship and I had to speak. Following the service the Reverend Gardner Ward spoke to me. He asked me what I was planning to do with my life. I told him I was going to study engineering. He said the Church could use me.

Now things began to fall into place. I remembered the voice I had heard as a child calling my name. I remembered the feeling I had had in Montreal at the Youth Rally there. Now there was this constant voice that would not be silenced. Then finally the voice of one who did not know my background. I re-applied for Queen's, this time to go into Arts and applied to the Session of Trinity to become a candidate for the Ministry. They quickly made me a member of the Church and forwarded my application to Presbytery. It so happened that Ron McCaw, whose father ran the local dairy, was also a candidate. We were the first candidates in fifty years from that congregation.

Chapter Five

THE UNIVERSITY YEARS, 1952-1959

When I left Smiths Falls for Kingston that September I had \$150 in my pocket and no idea how I was going to finance my education at Queen's. But I was sure that if God wanted me in ministry He would provide the means. I was accepted as a mature student. This meant that the failure of any exam at Christmas would mean I was not eligible to continue.

Fortunately through Ron I was able to team up with Bob Gracey and Bob Hadcock who were also studying for the ministry and the four of us rented an apartment on Johnson Street for \$70 a month. We bought our own food and we shared the cooking.

Soon after arriving in Kingston I saw a notice regarding the University Naval Training Division. They offered to pay me \$10 a night, so I joined up and lived on that \$10 a week that first year. Supplemented by whatever help Dad could spare from his very meagre salary in Jamaica. There was no money for any social activity, and only very rarely a film. My nose was in the books from day one.

We enjoyed the home games of the Queens Football Team. We attended Chalmers United Church, both morning and evening services, and were fed by Dr Franklin Banister. That first Christmas I spent with Ron's family in Smiths Falls and the money for my second term fees came out of the blue with a cheque from the Women's Group at Trinity.

I survived Christmas exams, also the end of term, so my first year of arts was under my belt with credits in Philosophy 1, Economics 1, Organic Chemistry, Psychology and English. Examinations behind, I was able to head for Halifax and my first summer training early. This meant I would get paid. It also meant getting the facilities ready for the incoming cadets. There was endless cleaning and painting. But the days passed quickly and before we knew it the rest of the cadets arrived and were assigned to training divisions and classes got under way. Part of summer training was to be at sea. My division was assigned to *HMCS Swansea*, a corvette, and our cruise was to the UK for the coronation of Queen Elizabeth.

We had a very rough crossing and I spent many nights with my back to the funnel and being violently seasick. We slung hammocks in the mess, which were very comfortable once you got into them and if you could stand the smell as others were unable to make it to the deck in time and were sick on the floor. We

had a brief break when we ran into St John's, Newfoundland, to put a seaman ashore who had an attack of appendicitis.

Arriving in London we were moored at Greenwich. We were part of the huge crowds that lined the streets as the coronation coach made its way to Westminster Abbey. We had leave in which I was able to get back to Guernsey and visit my sister Mary and brother David who was by then living with her and attending school in Guernsey. We then went around to Spithead and were part of the fleet reviewed by the Queen. I was also able to have a visit with sister Margaret who was at Oxford.

The summer passed quickly. We worked hard – Seamanship, Gunnery, Navigation, Damage Control. We rowed whalers, participated in sailing regattas and learned to march, shoot a rifle as well as a six inch gun. Church was optional, and I attended the chapel on the base but was also involved with one of the local United Churches. It was at the Sunday Chapel services that I noticed a Nursing Sister who was also a student at Queen's. However, as there was no fraternizing between lowly cadets and officers, any further acquaintance with her had to be put on hold.

As summer drew to a close I had high hopes of winning the Dirk which was given to the best cadet in summer training. But I lucked out, some said because I didn't spend enough time in the mess with the training officers! At this time in my life I was a teetotaler.

So I returned to Queens to begin my second year. This time I knew I could pay my way as I had saved all my summer earnings. We had a different apartment on Division Street, a little farther from the University and a new roommate, Clayton Moorehouse. Ron had missed his year and had transferred to Toronto.

But to my surprise, when I went to my first Child Psychology class, who should be there but the Nursing Sister I had spotted in Chapel services at Stadacona. Her name, I discovered, was Mary Ann Tolmie. Then when our professor assigned work placements for the term I found myself partnered with Mary Ann in the nursery at Hotel Dieu Hospital. We also attended Chalmers United Church and were part of a small Bible Study group led by Dr Banister on Sunday evenings after church. This led us to be asked to form a Youth Group, with Anne Terry and Gus Preston, who was the local assistant Ag Rep. We had different speakers each Sunday night, organized sleigh rides and parties. We had between 50 and 60 students every Sunday night.

In January of 1954 after the annual meeting at Chalmers, I walked Mary Ann back to her residence and asked her to go to the Royal Military College

Valentine Dance. We went and during the evening I asked her to be my Valentine. At the end of March I asked her to marry me and with the last of my summer money, bought an engagement ring. This she accepted after her last class at 11:30 a.m. on April 1st. I had given it to her the night before, but we put it on her finger at that time. During that winter there had been many walks back from *HMCS Cataraqui* after drill night and from Young Peoples, long talks in the vestibule of the Ban Righ and on other nights long telephone conversations. There was tea and hot cross buns in the common room. Her parents came down from Toronto and we had dinner at the Queen's Hotel. Our wedding date was set for October 2nd that year.

Second year summer training was to take place on the West coast. I was to take the train but stopped for a few days in Toronto to meet some of Mary Ann's friends. This was a little embarrassing for me because they wanted us to go to the theatre but I had no money. In fact, though the Navy provided the train ticket, there was nothing for meals for the three-day journey to Victoria. I was not going to be able to eat. Now the cat was out of the bag and I received some assistance which was difficult – I did not mind not eating as the ring was, to me, more important.

Mary Ann was also assigned to the hospital at Naden in Victoria but drove a car out for General Motors. On arriving she did not have to turn it in right away, so had the use of a red convertible for a few days. In the interim I wrote to her almost every day. Part of the summer I was stationed in dockyard, six weeks at Royal Roads and then sea training on board *HMCS Stettler*. I was appointed Cadet Captain and was responsible for my division.

While at Royal Roads we studied Astro Navigation and I was awarded the prize for top mark that summer, 98.6%. There were also a few high jinks.

Royal Roads is on a landlocked lagoon which can only be exited at certain tides. One night a group of cadets, not in my division, took a whaler, exited the lagoon and rowed down into the dockyard where they removed the clapper from the bell on the parade square. Next morning when everyone had fallen in on parade square for morning divisions, the duty officer called for eight bells which is part of the ceremony of raising the duty colours, but the bell could not be rung – the clapper was gone. There was a real uproar as Dockyard was supposed to be a secure facility. Of course the Dockyard Cadets retaliated and tried to steal one of the brass cannons from Royal Roads. This brought the fire hoses into play.

While at Royal Roads I was instrumental in organising a sailing club. This led to our participation in a sailing regatta in Bellingham, Washington.

The cruise that summer was in the waters around Vancouver Island. The one piece of excitement was when we were called out to chase what was believed to be a Russian submarine. We went to battle stations and were at the ready for several days, hearing the return ping on our asdic and having depth charges ready to let go, if so ordered.

Mary Ann and I spent as much time as we could together. There were occasional dinners at the officers' mess. As I was a cadet captain and we were engaged this was acceptable. It was also an on-again off-again summer; that is, the ring was on and off a few times. But when September came we travelled back to Ontario together by train through the Rockies and then we flew from Edmonton to Toronto.

I moved into the apartment we had rented on Albert Street in Kingston. It was sparsely furnished with our wedding gifts. Our bedroom suite, a gift from Mary Ann's parents, a pull-out couch from Mary Ann's home and one easy chair which served us well for many years. The study had a desk and chair we had picked up. We ate off the ironing board until we got our kitchen set of a table and four chairs. We used bricks and boards for a bookcase, as well as orange crates.

It was a basement apartment, rather dark, but the back bedroom had lots of windows and was sunny and bright. I lived there alone until after the wedding.

Mary Ann had graduated from Nursing Science, having previously earned her RN from Toronto General and experienced two years of the medical course at Queen's. She had obtained a position at Kingston General in the pediatric department. Her speciality was teaching pediatrics. Her first request on reporting for work was a week-end off to get married. Fortunately her boss was very understanding and so we were able to travel up to Toronto on the train with many of our guests on the Friday before the wedding.

I stayed with the next door neighbours. The rehearsal was nerve-wracking. There were three couples to be married on October 2nd. We met with the minister, Dr Johnson, who had baptized and confirmed Mary Ann. He was very nice and friendly but used the time to fill out the required forms and said nothing to us about marriage. I was disappointed to say the least, and determined always to prepare couples adequately for marriage when the time came.

October 2nd dawned bright and beautiful. I had time to put in so I went downtown to do some shopping. This caused some consternation as I didn't return until I had just time to dress for the wedding. The ceremony went off without a hitch. The McCaws from Smiths Falls filled in as my parents. The only other relatives on my side to be present were Uncle Fred and Aunt Rosemary.

From the Church we drove through the streets of Toronto, a beautiful fall afternoon with the crowd pouring out of Varsity Stadium to our reception at then we went dancing with our friends from Queens at Casa Loma and eventually to a motel along the waterfront. On Sunday morning we returned our rented car, had a brief visit with the Tolmies and took the train back to Kingston with our friends.

We were back in time for Church at Chalmers and supper with Marilyn and her sister before heading for our apartment which we entered to find the floor covered in water. We had left the de-humidifier plugged in and it was overflowing.

Our life soon settled into a routine – work and classes. I was starting my third year of Arts. We were on a very tight budget. One Saturday following a Queen's home game we invited another couple back for supper only to realize that we only had two sets of cutlery. Fortunately we were able to buy more before they arrived. All was going smoothly and then Mary Ann began feeling a bit tired and run down. She went to see her doctor who eventually suggested to her that she might be pregnant. Children we both wanted, but this was not the most propitious time to begin our family. So it was determined that our first child was to be born in December of 1955. This would mean that Mary Ann would have to take time off work, in fact may only be able to work part-time. How would we manage?

Final exams were upon me and I passed with flying colours – straight As. I was appointed to a summer mission field by the United Church in Montreal. No naval training this year. Cadet days were over. I had received my commission as a Sub-Lieutenant in the Reserves.

However no accommodation was provided by the Church. We were able to sub-let an apartment on Crescent Street in downtown Montreal from a theolog attending McGill. There was also no salary. We were supposed to live off the collection plate. But there was no congregation. There was, however, a Sunday-school meeting in a school in Garden Hill, an English-speaking development in Montreal North made up of wartime housing. All I was given was a street address where the Sundayschool met.

Mary Ann was able to get a job at the Montreal General which was about to move into brand new facilities. She worked in the nursery which was air-conditioned. This was a real bonus because that summer was a terribly hot summer, 114° Fahrenheit on St Catherine's Street.

I was in trouble from the start with the Superintendent of Home Missions. I was informed that I was supposed to live with one of the families in Garden Hill, none of whom had room for another couple. After some persuasion I was able to get a small advance on salary so that we could get by.

On the first Sunday we took the tram out to the north end of the Island of Montreal and walked into the school to find a Sundayschool in operation. We arranged to begin services the next Sunday, using a corridor of the school. There I set up chairs, a table with an orange crate covered by a cloth as a pulpit, and we were in business.

Most days I worked on sermon and worship in the morning and then rode a bicycle the ten miles to the field to knock on doors and develop a congregation. A large shopping centre had been developed just south of Montreal North on Pied Neuf at Ville St Michel. I obtained the use of an empty store front and began a second service there. By the end of the summer the Garden Hill congregation was organized with 150 members and we were meeting in the Town Hall. The Roman Catholic mayor had given the congregation ten lots of town land to build a church. The congregation chose to build a house church which operated for many years. Looking back, it amazes me that the National Church should have sent someone like me, with no training in ministry, having just completed an arts programme, with a wife who was pregnant, into such a situation. But we survived and were not discouraged. In fact just the opposite. The result from a summer's work was more than I expected.

We returned to Kingston in September and to our apartment on Albert Street. The College, knowing our situation, had made arrangements for a student appointment to Calvary United Church on Bagot Street in the city. Thus I began a three-year ministry in a former Congregational Church. It was also one of the most productive periods of my life.

My supervisor, mentor and friend was Dr Donald Mathers. He and his wife Helen were always ready and willing to help, with a pram when Phil was born, and with guidance whenever needed.

Our life together was a team effort. Mary Ann played the organ for the morning service and led the junior choir. Mrs Topliss, the baker's wife, played in the evening and led the senior choir. Mary Ann continued to work in the pediatric department at Kingston General. I went to classes, prepared two sermons every week and looked after the pastoral needs of an active congregation in a working-class area. We enjoyed a full church morning and evening for the entire three years, something I have never experienced since. I chose to do my Master's

degree along with the regular theological course and chose the ten course options, that is, to do ten extra courses.

My salary was \$30 a week. In the summer of 1956 we moved from our apartment on Albert Street to a duplex on Montreal Street next door to the Eadies who owned both. This was rent-free. Shortly after the congregation made plans to build a manse next door to the church, which was accomplished with a great deal of volunteer labour. Construction began the last week of August 1956 and we were able to move in by the beginning of November. It was dedicated in May of 1957 as a memorial to Ernest Thompson, a faithful member and worker of the congregation. The Mayor of Kingston, Frank Boyce, Reverend Dr George Brown and Reverend R. Smalley attended the dedication ceremony.

Philip was born on December 5th, 1955. My sermon the following Sunday was on the text "Unto us a child is born". His crib was a wicker basket that Mary Ann had retrieved from Montreal General when it moved into its new facilities. We carried it to Church and Phil slept in it beside the organ while Mary Ann played for the morning service. My father, on his way back to England from Jamaica, baptized Philip, his first grandson.

In 1957 a two-year-old child arrived at the Kingston Pediatric department in a catatonic condition. The doctor in charge was not sure whether her condition was because of having been confined to her bed in the dark for a long time or whether there was a physical cause. Mary Ann brought her home as an experiment to see what a normal home environment might do. Within two weeks she was a normal happy child. Nancy stayed with us for a year. We intended to adopt her as we had lost a potential child via a miscarriage but, on the day after Catherine was born, the courts decided to give her back to her family. The Children's Aid worker called at 11:00 a.m. to say she would be there to pick her up at noon. Mary Ann had no chance to get out of the hospital to say goodbye. To this day we have no idea what happened to her or where she is.

In May of 1957 Gerry Wilson was approached and agreed to form a Scout Group which would be open to all denominations. Thus the 21st Kingston Cub Pack was organized and I acted as the chairman of the Group Committee. Ted Burtch, a Sundayschool Superintendent, became Cub Master in 1958 and later became a lay minister serving a number of congregations, eventually retiring in Orillia and attending St Paul's where our paths once again crossed.

Mary Ann's parents were very supportive though her mother thought our having children at this stage of our life together unwise, to say the least. They provided us with a car, a light green Plymouth, which enabled us to get away from

the city once in a while. It also took us to Halifax for my summer training. There one summer we stayed with Mary Ann's Aunt and Uncle, Archie and Evelyn Tolmie. We were able to get to know the other members of the family, and Margaret taught Phil to crawl. It was also on one of these summer trips that we discovered York Beach in Maine and enjoyed our first strawberry-rhubarb pie. We were also able to visit Ann and Rudolf Leiber, another aunt of Mary Ann's, also my Uncle Edwin and wife Edith and their infant son John, in Truro, Nova Scotia.

Our years at Queens and Calvary were good years. But graduation day came and, to my surprise, I had won the travelling fellowship as well as the prize in New Testament which I had won every year. We decided that we would go to St Andrews University in Scotland, Dr Mather's alma mater, to pursue my interest in Christology under Dr Matthew Black. To help cover the expenses I agreed to spend the whole summer with the navy. I was appointed Great Lakes Training Officer, which involved first joining my ship *HMCS Portage* in Sydney, Nova Scotia and coming with her to Hamilton which was to be our base for the summer. My responsibility was to train a different group of 40 seamen in basic seamanship every two weeks. I picked them up from and returned them by bus to Hamilton from wherever the ship might be in the Great Lakes. This also meant I was able to see Mary Ann and the children at least every two weeks. They spent the summer partly at Blackstock with my parents and also at the Glen on the farm with Mary Ann's Aunt Margaret, Uncle Bill and Dan. I was also able to complete my Coastal Watch-keeping Certificate and also received my second stripe (Lieutenant).

In September I returned from Sydney, Nova Scotia and rejoined the family in Toronto. Then we went by train to Montreal where we boarded the *Carinthia* and sailed for Glasgow, Scotland. It was a stormy crossing. Mary Ann and Catherine took to their bunks after we left the St Lawrence and did not emerge until Greenock hove in sight. I had found my sea legs that summer and Phil proved to be a good sailor. We never missed a meal but often we were almost alone in the dining room. Just before arrival Phil had an accident in the playroom on the slide and received a severe cut over an eye. It was one of the hardest things for me to do to hold him while the doctor stitched it up.

We were met in Greenock, the port for Glasgow, by Eldon and Vivian Hay who had been a year ahead of us at Queen's and were studying at Glasgow University. They drove us over to St Andrews but, as the stores were closed and there was no food in the house we had rented, we looked for a restaurant. The only one open was a café over the cinema and there we ate beans on toast. It was a very limited menu.

The house was sparsely furnished. The front door opened onto the sidewalk, a busy sidewalk, as it was the student thoroughfare from the Assembly Hall to the classrooms. The entry had a stone floor and stone stairs leading up to the second floor. There was a living room on the left as you entered the house, with a very small grate for heating. The kitchen was next in line and connected to the dining room by a pass-through hatch. In the kitchen was a stove that heated the water, the sink for doing the dishes and a small box outside on the window ledge for keeping milk and eggs, etc cool. Upstairs were two bedrooms with gas heaters. The bathroom was off the landing between the floors and hung out over a tiny back yard. In the winter the water froze in the toilet bowl. We added a couple of deep easy chairs for the living room and a bed for our bedroom which we picked up at an auction house around the corner. The bed in our room collapsed with us in it. With no refrigeration, shopping for perishables was done on a daily basis.

There was a good group of post-grad students at the college. I was the only Canadian, the others were all American. The only course I took was Hebrew as I had not done any before. My time was spent in the library researching my topic which was "The Jesus of History and the Christ of Faith". I also spent time in consultation with Matthew Black who was working on a new translation of Paul's letter to the Romans for the New English Bible. The more I got into my subject the more obvious it became that, as most of the recent scholarship in this area was in German, to pursue my chosen field would mean spending time on brushing up my German. Then as I talked to some of my fellow students who were studying such things as Coptic in order to translate an ancient manuscript as the basis of their thesis in order to get a PhD which would gain them entrance into the teaching field, I eventually decided that a PhD would not improve my pastoral skills and that was what I was really interested in, not teaching at a theological college.

Christmas 1958 saw us heading south in our Morris Minor to spend the holiday season in London. We stopped overnight at Nottingham with Len and Grace Hardy, arriving quite late as we had some battery trouble, on top of it being very foggy. We have never forgotten the warmth of our reception and the orange jello with mandarin oranges that the children enjoyed before going to bed. Then we went on to London where we rendezvoused with David and Jeanette for Christmas Day. We met Sandy Sims, one of Mary Ann's bridesmaids, and attended a stage performance of Peter Pan.

As time went by it became obvious that we didn't have sufficient funds to do more than one year, if that. So it was not long before I put my name in for

weekend preaching. One weekend I was asked to go to a Kirk in one of the Glens of Angus. It was snowing as I drove up the glen and I arrived at the church to find a fire burning in the pot-bellied stove but a note on the door to say that the shepherds were on the hills caring for their sheep so there would be no service that day. On another occasion I was asked to go to Glamis, the home of the Bowes-Lyons, and after the service I met the Queen Mum's father who had been sitting in the gallery. All I could see of him was his piercing eyes peering down at me. Then for several months I went to Arbroath and preached at St Ninian's. I would go up on the train, getting there for the morning service, then lunch often with the Petries and, after the evening service, return by train. Eventually I was invited to become the part-time assistant to the Reverend Maurice King at St Margaret's Parish Church in Glenrothes, a new mining town not far from Kirkcaldy. My responsibility was to organize the second parish for the community called St Ninian's. A number of elders from St Margaret's were assigned to the new parish and together we gathered a congregation in a school auditorium. I visited the families in the area assigned to the new parish, conducted worship, and organized a Sundayschool, working several afternoons a week. Then in August, while the Kings were on holiday, we moved into the manse. It was there that we received the telegram from Head office asking us to consider going to serve the West Coast Marine Mission instead of the Sharbot Lake Pastoral Charge.

Phil went to playschool, giving Mary Ann a bit of a break. But early in the new year we discovered that she was pregnant and so a sister for Catherine was born in August, Susan Morag. Mary Ann gave birth at Craigtoun Maternity Hospital. She was supposed to stay there for a week with a large portion of that time to be spent in bed. When Susan was nine days old we left St Andrews and headed for Guernsey via Guildford where we stayed overnight with Mary Ann's cousin Lorna and her husband Desmond at White Cottage. We then drove to Weymouth to catch the boat for Guernsey. The traffic was so heavy and slow that as we approached Weymouth we saw the boat leaving. This meant a drive to Southampton in order to catch the night boat. It was a rough crossing. Mary Ann and the girls were in the ladies' lounge, Phil and I in the men's lounge.

We had rented a chalet at L'islet which was very comfortable and only a short step to the beach. Nancy Dorey lent us her car and someone else lent us a baby carriage. Dad and Elaine were at Easterbrook, Margaret and her husband David Clutterbuck who had been at Kingswood when I was there, were also in Guernsey for a holiday with two of their children, Ruth and Gillian. The weather was good and we had several pleasant afternoons at the beach, though Dad never

got out of his overcoat! I preached at St Sampson's Methodist Church one Sunday.

Our holiday was all too short. It was time to head for Canada and the next chapter in our lives. Mary Ann returned to Southampton, took the car to London to leave at the docks for shipment home. It was a new Vauxhall, blue and white, which we could bring home duty free if we had been out of the country a year. She then flew home from London with the two girls, having visited briefly with a nurse, Mary MacKenzie, whom we had met in Montreal and who was now married and living in London. It proved to be an exhausting trip as the flight was delayed and then, on arrival in Toronto, the immigration insisted on Susan being vaccinated before they were allowed into the country. Philip and I went by train from London to Liverpool and stayed with Aunty Minnie. I preached in the church where Dad grew up and met a number of relatives, including some of the Doneghys. We then went on by train to Prestwick in Scotland from where we flew to Toronto and rejoined Mary Ann and the girls for the flight to Vancouver. The new car was left with Mary Ann's father who bought it from us eventually when it had been in the country long enough.

Chapter Six

WEST COAST MARINE MISSION

We arrived in Vancouver and were met by a member of the Marine Committee who drove us down to Menchions Shipyard where the mission boat *Melvin Swartout* was docked. Until this moment we had no idea what the West Coast Marine Mission entailed.

To our surprise our mission boat was a beautiful 65-foot diesel-powered luxury yacht with three cabins – a fore cabin, a master cabin in the centre and an aft cabin – a wheelhouse on the upper deck with a galley and main saloon, and a huge after deck covered overhead. The superstructure was teak and the hull had a second skin to combat ice. She was named after one of the missionaries who had been drowned off Barclay Sound when returning after a wedding service. We also discovered that our base of operations was not to be Vancouver or Victoria, but a small fishing village on the west coast of Vancouver Island called Bamfield, at the entrance to Barclay Sound. This was a two-day trip from Vancouver if we stopped over in Victoria. Our few personal possessions were being shipped west by one of the Van Lines and so we waited for them.

Once we were loaded we were anxious to get to Bamfield. Dick, my engineer, had been away from home more than a month so we did not stop in Victoria and arrived in Bamfield, after a stormy trip through Juan de Fuca Straights and around Cape Beale, in time for breakfast.

Bamfield we discovered was a village of some fifty families of many nationalities – Fins, Russians, Norwegians, Swedes, Chinese, as well as English and an aboriginal family, the Jacks. The homes were built around an inlet. There was a BC Packers store and fish camp, a post office, a lifeboat station, an independent food store, a coffee shop, a Red Cross outpost hospital and Ostroms Marine Service and, of course, a three-room school and community hall. The Trans Pacific Cable had had a station there which closed just before we arrived which meant the exodus of some 100 families.

The majority of the men were fishermen operating trawlers during the all-too-short salmon season. A few worked for the lifeboat and a couple for the telephone company who also kept the trail open to Cape Beale and Pachena Lights. There were no roads in the community. Trails ran down both sides of the inlet and small boats were used to cross the inlet.

The manse, a clapboard structure with a walk-in, earth floor basement, was on the opposite side of the inlet to the store, post office, school and community hall. It was set back about 100 feet from the water and had its own dock for the *Melvin Swartout* and a covered area for a small powered dinghy which we used to travel around the inlet. We had our own power plant, a diesel generator that also supplied power for the engineer's home which was next door. It was turned on only when power was needed, to do the washing in the daytime and then for illumination at night. We turned it off when we went to bed. We had a kerosene stove for cooking and a kerosene furnace for heating the house. The fuel for these appliances was landed on the dock in 50 gallon barrels and then we pumped it up to a tank behind the house. We had our own well which was only a few feet deep and therefore not a great capacity as we discovered the first summer when it went dry. It was a comfortable house. A flight of stairs outside led up to a veranda and the front door. On entering, my study was to the left, a long narrow room with a beautiful view down the inlet towards Barclay Sound. The living room opened off the front door. There were two bedrooms at the back of the house and a large kitchen off the living room at the front of the house. There was a wood-burning fireplace in the living room which was used quite frequently. Upstairs there were two more bedrooms.

Next door was the engineer's home. Dick and Margaret Pardy and their son Eric had come from St Anthony, Newfoundland where they had both worked for the Grenfell Mission, Dick delivering supplies to the mission stations along the Labrador coast by sailing ship in the summer and by dog team in winter. Margaret had been a nurse serving in one of those isolated mission stations. Dick, thin as a rail, with a wonderful sense of humour, was an invaluable member of the mission, keeping the engine running and the teak and superstructure of the *Melvin Swartout* in tiptop shape as well as helping with the navigation and general deck hand responsibilities when there were only two people to run a boat like this. Margaret helped out at the Red Cross hospital and, when the incumbent resident nurse retired, she took over as the official nurse in charge.

At this time there was no church building in the community. The congregation met in the Cable Station Hall and was made up of the women of the community. There was a strong Sunday school which was held in the manse. Music was provided by a portable pump organ which we carried on the boat. There was a very active women's group who worked hard with rummage sales and bake sales in order to supplement the Sunday offering. The Girl Guides had a strong company under the able leadership of Shirley Smith. There was also a

dance combo in which Mary Ann played the accordion and provided good music for dances through the winter months. I held services every other Sunday morning and had a bible study group that met every other week.

Other families around the inlet were the Kees, Jones, Yorks, Phillips, Ostroms, Jennings, Wickhams, McKays, Hegstroms, Logans, Christneys, Miss Miller, Garcias....

I was responsible for the 100-150 miles of coastline. We visited the communities close to the shore including Ucluelet, Tofino, Ahousat, Hot Springs Cove, Sarita River, Kildonan, Franklin River and the lighthouses at Estevan, Cape Beale and Pachena. I was away from home every other week. A typical week away would mean leaving Bamfield on a Monday morning and heading for Ucluelet on the opposite side of the sound. There I would visit the homes. On Tuesday, weather permitting, we would head up the coast on the outside by passing Tofino and reaching Ahousat where the resident missionary would ring the church bell when we were seen coming up the inlet, and that evening we would have a church service. Then the next day we would head for Estevan, anchor in the bay and I would go ashore in the dinghy to be picked up by a member of the lighthouse staff and taken to the light by truck over a wooden road made of two ten-inch-wide planks. There I would visit and have a service and be away, hopefully, in time to make Hotsprings Cove for the night. There would be some visiting and preparation for Sunday worship. One service in Tofino, one at Tofino airport and one at Ucluelet. Tofino airport was soon closed and then I was able to add Port Albion and the Ucluelet Indian village. I was initially dependent on someone providing me with transportation between Tofino and Ucluelet but it was not long before I bought a little Morris Minor for \$50 and could then buzz back and forth more easily.

The week at home involved visits down the Sound to Kildonan and Sarita River from where a member of the church would drive me to the logging camp at Franklin River. Initially services were held in Sarita River, Franklin River and Bamfield. When Sarita River became a ghost town I bought an old car which I could leave there and then could get to Franklin River when needed, usually on every other Sunday morning. As the work grew it became important to go there for evenings and so I bought a motor bike and took the walking trail through the woods to the logging road and then on to the camp. Fortunately MacMillan-Bloedel was aware and the word would go out over the truck radio to be on the lookout for me and, while the motor bike fell apart occasionally, I was never in any danger from speeding logging trucks. In this way I was able to hold

membership classes and bible study sessions in Franklin River without putting too much strain on Dick who would have had to be away from home if we had used the boat for part of the trip. However it was not easy to persuade the Board of Home Missions who paid my salary that I needed two cars and a motor bike to do the work of a marine mission effectively and that I should therefore be paid some kind of travel allowance. My Superintendent for Home Missions in BC, the Reverend Bob Henderson, was very helpful and was truly supportive of all we tried to do, misguided though some of it might have been in hindsight.

As I have mentioned services were held in the Cable Station Hall in Bamfield, in a school classroom at Franklin River, in the Anglican Church in Ucluelet, in the Community Hall in Port Albion, in a home in Tofino at first. The only church building was at the Ucluelet Indian village. It was a wooden structure with a roof that leaked, an oil drum with a chimney through the roof that smoked. The congregation was small and was held together by the school teacher. There was no musical instrument so it was always important to pick hymns that I knew and felt I could lead the singing. It was my first experience of meeting aboriginal people. One of the other marine missionaries shared his experience with me which I found helpful. He told me of a time when two of the native elders came down to his boat. He was busy writing a sermon but did not want to appear inhospitable. He invited them aboard and chatted with them, or I should say at them, for they said not a word. He wished they would say why they had come, what was so important. But they sat in silence. Eventually he ran out of conversation. There was a silence for a while and then one said they had a baby they would like to have baptized. The arrangements were made and they left. He learned that talk for the sake of talk is unnecessary. So I learned to sit with our native folk in their homes.

Among my many memories is that of the night run from Bamfield to Tahsis in Nootka Inlet. The Marine Missionary stationed there, Bill Howie, was away and I had been asked to conduct a wedding in the new church there. We travelled through bad weather and arrived in fog and rain in the inlet. The church is a beautiful A-frame structure which stands out in the community as it was built on a hillside. The climb to the church was nicknamed "cardiac hill". The wedding took place on December 30th when Rosa Lapp and Harry Morrow exchanged vows and we had the first snowfall of the year.

On another occasion our telephone rang after midnight. It was the Red Cross nurse to tell me that Ted Wiseman, one of the local fishermen, had had a heart attack and would have to be taken to hospital in Port Alberni. I roused Dick,

my engineer, and we motored across the inlet to pick up our patient and the nurse. As we cruised up the Alberni Canal, Dick in the bows and my eyes glued to the radar screen as we watched for possible deadheads that could at worst rip our hull open and at the very least damage our propeller, I radioed the hospital so that an ambulance was at the dock to meet us when we arrived.

Then there were day trips to Ucluelet taking the school children over for a field day against the Ucluelet school. The trip to Sarita River to bring the Guides and Brownies to Bamfield for a Thinking Day service in honour of Baden Powell. There were Sunday school picnics at a beach outside Tofino and at Brady's Beach near Bamfield. Then there was the occasional fishing by dinghy out in Barclay Sound with an occasional catch of Coho or Rock cod. There were expeditions to gather drifting logs to bring home for firewood.

The annual trip to Victoria and Vancouver for refit and the opportunity to meet people in Victoria and Salt Spring Island and to get to know some wonderful folk from Canadian Memorial in Vancouver – Stuart McCloud and his wife, who allowed us to use their home while the *Melvin Swartout* was in dry dock, Cliff and Pat Coolidge, Laura and her daughter Marion, Bob Henderson and his wife, and Bessy Lane, the deaconess.

Then there were the weddings – Hazel June, one of the teachers in the school, asked me to conduct her wedding in Victoria; Sheena, our babysitter while we were in Scotland had immigrated to Canada and was living in Victoria, met her husband and I was asked to share in that ceremony. While in Bamfield Pat, the Red Cross nurse, married Joe Garcia, a local fisherman. There was a double wedding in the manse of two native couples, Violet and Marie Clappis, sisters, married Louie Joseph and Harry Williams. Mary Ann made a cake and the reception followed the simple ceremony. In Ucluelet it was Marlene Forbes, a nurse, and John Celinski, a logger (who died in a logging accident). Marlene now nurses in Hawaii.

There were membership classes, bible study groups, night rides on my motor bike along a walking trail through the woods and logging trails to Franklin River. Night trips across Barclay Sound in driving rain and snow with only the radar screen to show me the way home. Snow in the air was one thing, snow on the ground was a rare sight. It happened once in our three years there. However, a boat ride to Sarita and a short car ride to Franklin River and the children could enjoy snow to their hearts content. Then there was the trip to Victoria as a member of the local Roads Committee to persuade the Province to open a road into Bamfield.

As I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the basement of the manse was above-ground and, with a dirt floor, was infested with mice. I would set a dozen traps every night, then go upstairs and turn the power off before getting into bed. Within minutes we could hear the traps snapping. I could go down with a flashlight, empty them and reset them and the same thing would happen. One of the fishermen in Ucluelet, hearing this story, gave us a cat. We called her Ginger and from that day on we had the mice under control.

I had always wanted to have a dog, but was never permitted. So one day, seeing an ad in a Port Alberni paper for golden lab puppies, I went in to see them and brought one home. I called him Admiral. He was a great dog, gentle with the children and got along with Ginger. But when the time came to leave Bamfield it did not seem fair to take him back to Ontario. He was used to roaming free with no worries about traffic and so we gave him to a family in Franklin River.

But the biggest project developed when the women of the community decided it was high time that there was a church in Bamfield. On one of my trips to Vancouver I contacted an architect who drew us a set of plans for an A-frame church with a Sunday school wing.

The site we chose was a point of land on the manse side of the inlet, just across a little bay beside the manse. It was owned by the Pacific cable Company. Negotiations were conducted by the Board of Home Missions in Toronto and eventually the church acquired ownership of the point.

A logger who was working at Pachena cut a road in (about 3 miles) with his bulldozer so that the site could be cleared. It was then discovered that the site, far from being level as we had hoped, contained large amounts of rock that were going to have to be removed. The fishermen in the community organized the drilling and the blasting and we eventually removed 70 square yards of rock.

There being no roads into the community, all our building materials had to be brought in by barge from Port Alberni, some thirty miles away at the head of Barclay sound. Gravel, sand, cement, etc were shoveled from the barge which grounded at low tide and then with wheelbarrows was moved to the site. The same was true of all the lumber and shingles, glass, etc. MacMillan-Bloedell supplied all the lumber for a nominal price. The logs for the A-frame had to be returned as we had no means to raise them, so they were replaced with 2-10's which were nailed together, using scaffolding as the frames took shape and height. We hired one carpenter, Glen Burgess, from Victoria. The rest of the labour was provided by the men and women of the community. I was the organizer of the volunteer labour. It was built in three of the wettest months,

January through March, 30 inches of rain a month. Towards the end of March our money was spent but the church was not quite finished. On the day we were going to have to let our carpenter go a cheque arrived from a lady in Toronto and we were able to complete the building. The total cost was in the neighbourhood of \$14,000. The chairs were provided by the Canadian Memorial United Church.

The work in Tofino progressed as well. We held a summer bible school in a storefront and then the congregation bought the Shanty Mans Church and renovated it and it became the congregation's home for a few years.

Each summer a student was appointed to assist in the work. He travelled with me for the first little while and then, while the *Melvin Swartout* was away for refit, he would conduct bible camps in Tofino-Ucluelet.

We had arrived with three young children. Philip started school in Bamfield. He had a wonderful Grade One teacher, Viven Harrison, who gave him a wonderful start. She now lives in Los Angeles and we were able to visit her in March of 1996. Then in 1960 Mary Ann became pregnant and when the time drew near for her delivery, I had to take her into Port Alberni (our nearest hospital) and leave her with friends at the Alberni Residential School. Elizabeth was born in Port Alberni in 1961.

Our first summer in Bamfield Mary Ann's parents joined us and with her father's help and Dick's we painted the outside of the manse. The second summer Mary Ann flew home with the children while I attended a summer school at the Vancouver School of Theology (Union Theological College).

At the Marine Conference held at Campbell River in January of 1962 it was decided to introduce an aircraft to the west coast. We had one operating out of Alert Bay. I was asked if I would like flying lessons. I declined and decided to resign from the Mission as of June 30th 1962. As I was returning to Bamfield, by road to Port Alberni and the boat, *Roy Rodgers*, the United Church minister there and former skipper of the *Melvin Swartout*, said there was a telephone message from Ontario. It was from Harry Freeman, the Chairman of the Pastoral Relations Committee in Courtice, wondering whether I would be open for a call to that particular charge. Arriving back in Bamfield Mary Ann and I talked about it and decided that that was where God wanted us to be.

It was decided that the work in the Tofino-Ucluelet area needed more attention and so an ordinand was to be placed there when I left. Bob Henderson and I interviewed possible candidates and asked Stuart Schoberg, the gold medalist that year at the Vancouver School of Theology, to accept this position for a year or two before doing his post-graduate work. Then in March 1963 he set out

in a twelve-foot boat to go from Ucluelet to Tofino on the open Pacific but he never arrived. His boat was found two miles off Ucluelet but his body was never recovered.

At the beginning of July 1962 we packed our things and boarded the *Melvin Swartout* for the final run into Port Alberni. We traded our old car for a station wagon but, even with it, discovered that we did not have room in it for ourselves and four children and all our belongings. *Roy Rodgers* came to our rescue and gave us a box that fitted on top of the car. We had bought a tent and a Coleman stove and, thus equipped, we set out for Ontario visiting friends in Cranbrook and Calgary on the way. We discovered that most campgrounds are next to railway tracks. We were often awakened with the fear that the train was going to go right through the tent, it was so loud. We picnicked with bears near Banff. Nearly lost Elizabeth when we had a swim in a lake. We had taken her out to a float and as we were chatting she slipped off the edge and sank to the bottom. Needless to say she was quickly retrieved with no ill effects.

We enjoyed the Calgary Stampede. Stopping to do a wash in Port Arthur, we swore that we would never ever want to live there. Ditto for the Sudbury area. We stopped off in Blind River to visit friends of Mary Ann's (Don and Joan Sutherland) who were building a home there and we bunked in with them in the basement, the only part completed. We eventually arrived in the Oshawa area and after a little difficulty located the manse in Courtice which, in those days, was simply a cross-roads with a post office, Nickels Garage and a corner store. There we met briefly with the Manse Committee, I held a preliminary interview with a couple who wanted to be married at the end of July, and we were once again on the road heading for New Brunswick to visit Mary Ann's grandfather who was 94. We were back in Courtice for the wedding at the end of July. So began a wonderful six years with the folk of Ebenezer, Maple Grove and Courtice.

Chapter Seven

THE ONTARIO YEARS

A) COURTICE, EBENEZER AND MAPLE GROVE

Courtice was an ideal location for us at this time. My father was serving the Blackstock Charge just to the north of Bowmanville and was able to drop in for frequent visits on his drives to the Oshawa Hospital to visit his congregation when sick. Mary Ann's parents lived in Toronto, less than an hour away. We were able to run up on a Sunday afternoon for a visit and sometimes get to Timothy Eaton for an evening service.

In 1962 the United Church was the only denomination with church buildings in the area between Oshawa on the west and Bowmanville on the east of Darlington Township. The manse was on the east side of Courtice Road just south of #2 Highway. The outside was finished with stucco with a veranda across the front and a shed across part of the rear of the house. There was a one-car garage with what was once a chicken house behind it.

The front door opened on to a hallway with stairs going up to the second floor. To the right was the living room which was connected with very attractive glass doors to the dining room and beyond that through another glass door was my study. The kitchen was at the end of the front hall with a door into the back shed and one into the dining room. On the second floor there were four bedrooms and a bathroom. The third floor was an open attic for storage. The basement was an area for more storage, a large cold room, a cistern that gathered rain water from the roof, and a children's play area. The Manse Committee went out of their way to make the house as comfortable as possible. In recent years it has been sold, a new manse built and the old one was torn down to make way for a planned shopping area.

We quickly settled into this new community. All three congregations welcomed us warmly. The manse being closest to Ebenezer, the family attended there and so naturally grew closer to the families they worshipped with there. The elementary school, South Courtice was about a mile away. Phil started there in

Grade 2 but was encouraged to combine it with Grade 3 which he did comfortably and so in our second year, he was in Grade 4. Cathy started Grade 1 while Susan and Beth soon were involved in a pre-school program in Oshawa. Mary Ann was able to go back to nursing part-time, beginning at Bowmanville Hospital and then the Oshawa General where she soon moved into the School of Nursing and, before we left, became Coordinator of In-service Education for the hospital.

There were three morning services – 9:30, 10:45 and 12 noon. All three congregations had good choirs and good organists, active Sunday schools, with an adult class at Ebenezer. We eventually organized a junior congregation at Ebenezer so that parents with young children could also attend worship as Sunday school was before church. Each congregation had its own women's organization. The WA became the United Church Women early in our time there, Mrs Marie Down was the first president. Mrs Pearce, one of my elders at Ebenezer, had a daughter Velma whom we got to know well in our Thunder Bay years. There was a very active Couples Club which drew its members from all three congregations. They met monthly. The highlight of the year was a retreat at a Lodge on White Lake near Minden at the close of the season. It was a time for fun, fellowship and growing together. It was there that I first tried water skiing. I got up on the skis once but have never tried to do it since.

Membership classes and Bible classes drew participants from all three congregations. We studied *The Word and the Way* in preparation for the New Curriculum. We spent several years studying every book in the bible. There were the usual church suppers, rummage sales, Sundayschool anniversaries, and drives to pay off the mortgage at Courtice who had built a new church, and then building fund drives at Maple Grove as they decided to tear down the old carriage shed and build a new Christian Education wing. Ebenezer had already done this. These were busy and in many ways successful years. We burned the mortgage at Courtice; we built and dedicated the new wing at Maple Grove; we celebrated the 100th Anniversary at Ebenezer and installed a new electric organ. The area was steadily growing as were the needs of the congregations. It was becoming an impossible task for one ordained person. It was decided to take on a second person and so the Reverend Dermot Arscott came to us from Jamaica in 1964. We teamed together successfully for the next two years. However the financial burden was too great. We were unable to convince the Board of Home Missions that a small grant for a few years would enable us to become financially viable. Reluctantly in 1966 we decided to divide the charge, Courtice going on its own and thus getting the much larger grant to have their full-time minister. Now was

the really tough decision – which congregation should I go with? I chose to go with Ebenezer-Maple Grove.

During these years I was busy at both Presbytery and Conference, serving as Convener of the Evangelism and Social Service Committee from 1963-67, and Convener of the Church & Industry Committee from 1964-68. At the Bay of Quinte Conference I served as Convener of Evangelism and Social Service Committee from 1966-68, and secretary-treasurer of Conference Planning Fellowships from 1966-68. At the national level I was a member of the Board of Evangelism and Social Service under Ray Hord and Clarke MacDonald. For six years I was the convener for a local Inter-Church Committee on Church & Industry, attending the National Consultation on Church & Industrial Society held in Waterloo from which came the concept of Church and Industry Institutes which led to Industrial Missions being established in Hamilton, Vancouver Airport and the financial district of Bay Street in Toronto. I also attended a Consultation on Industrial Mission in Cincinnati. I was the area representative for the Faith at Work Movement with Gordon Hunter, attending conferences in Barrie and London and organizing a Faith at Work week on my pastoral charge. I was also a member of Oshawa Social Planning Council. Our Local church and Industry Committee was instrumental in resolving a bitter strike at the Oshawa Times.

It was during this period that we became associated with the Child Sponsorship programme of the Hong Kong Council of Churches (in 1965). Au-Yeung Ling was our first child. We supported him through elementary school and high school and have kept in touch ever since. He is now married with two children and is a chemical technician. His wife is a buyer for a clothing manufacturer in Hong Kong. Then in 1974 we sponsored Lee Yim Ling. Her Christian name was Elaine. She is married to Sing a buyer for J.C. Penny, and has a son Larry. In 1978 we sponsored Chan Kim Sang who finished fifth form in 1980. Our fourth Hong Kong child was Kwok Wai Lan, Eliza. She became a Christian after a Billy Graham Crusade and has trained as a teacher and, when we last heard from her, was teaching in a Christian school.

But my most important memories are connected with the people of these three congregations; the Founds, whose postcard from Florida one winter eventually led to us having Dandie Dinmonts (a Scottish border terrier, for the uninitiated to the dog world) for many years; The Down clan who, under the leadership of Norman Down, took us into their family, including us at all their major celebrations, a connection we treasure and still try to maintain; the Osbornes, the Pearces, Ormistons, Courtices, the Browns, the Herons, the list is

endless. At Maple Grove there were the Lairds, Crydermans, Whites, Browns, Foleys, Brooks, Snowdens, Barraballs, Dobbs, again just to name a few. At Courtice there were the Warburtons, Shorts, DeCoes, Thompsons, Adairs.

We laughed together, we cried together, we shared good times, times of sickness, the death of loved ones, the birth of babies, the marriages of children, and times when a young person was in trouble.

We remember the Goyne family, Betty and Pat who babysat our children and whom I had the pleasure of joining in marriage. The Adairs, whose daughter brought her pony down to the manse so our girls could have a ride. The quilt that was given to us when we burned the mortgage at Courtice and has all the names of the families embroidered on it.

The girls enjoyed dancing and music lessons. Phil became involved with hockey in Bowmanville, playing for their Atom All-Star Team. One highlight of that was his being present with a hockey stick signed by Bobby Orr when he was chosen as the most valuable player in a game against a Rochester, New York team. We enjoyed the occasional trip to Toronto to see a special movie like *The Sound of Music*, and a visit to the Exhibition.

Summer holidays were family time. In 1963 and '64 Mary Ann's parents rented a cottage at Kincardine which we shared with them for a month, each family taking responsibility for the meals week about. The Bakers, long-time family friends, were next door. There was time for the beach, time to explore the area, time just to be. Saturday night was parade night in downtown Kincardine. The pipe band led the way down the main street and the children marched behind. We enjoyed the area so much that we looked at possible cottage properties, but decided that we couldn't afford the \$12,000 the one we liked would have cost. After all, my salary was only \$6,500 a year.

But before the summer of '65 we decided that we would buy a travel trailer. We bought a 17 ft Citation from Cooks Trailer Sales for \$2,500, on a line of credit. So for the next 12 years it was our summer home. Our first trip will never be forgotten. Someone in the congregation had given us an iced cake for the trip and when we arrived at our first night camping spot we opened the door to find that the cake and everything that had been in the fridge was all over the floor. We had not realized that there was a pin that should have been put in the door to prevent it from opening. Then the next night when the children climbed into the top bunk it collapsed. Eventually we got the difficulties worked out and enjoyed the freedom it gave us to travel together at minimal expense. In it we returned to Kincardine a time or two, camping with Bruce and Joan Down and their young

family. We also travelled through the Badlands of South Dakota to Wyoming and Yellowstone. We travelled to Banff for summer school on Family Counselling. We visited a Baptist Centre in Green Bay for a summer school on Evangelism and met the Johnsons from Chicago who have remained life-long friends.

One summer we visited Kitty Hawke, Chintatigue and Asatique and pony-penning day, and had a visit with Aunt Ann in Maryland. On one such trip I was able to visit the Church of our Saviour in Washington and the Church of the Covenant in Roanoke, both experiments in congregational life. We had a memorable trip back to the West coast with my father and step-mother Elaine, and their adopted son Dennis traveled with us in their car. We were able to spend time with my sister Mary in Salmon Arm as well as renewing old friendships in Vancouver and in Bamfield, actually seeing the landing on the moon and the walk there while we were visiting in Bamfield.

It was during this period that Shulman published the book *How to Make a Million Dollars*. The theory was that any who invested a thousand dollars wisely could become a millionaire. I studied this book. I bought the Financial Post and studied the stock market but couldn't bring myself to invest the thousand dollars. We had an endowment policy which had been bought when we got married with the idea that at 65 it would be sufficient to buy ourselves a house somewhere. We had come to the conclusion that it wouldn't even be a down-payment. We decided to invest in ourselves in the form of a holiday in Bermuda. Mary Ann's folks came to look after the children. We went for a week at the end of January we stayed at the old St George's Hotel which no longer exists. The first night we were alone in the dining room. The music from the grand piano was excellent but our conversation was limited. It was the first time since the children had been born that we were eating a meal on our own.

We explored the islands on a moped, discovered the Cozy Café and enjoyed cream teas; played a round of golf at the Mid-Ocean Club with the only other couple in our hotel. The weather was cool but sunny. Not swimming weather but the pink sand beaches were comfortable to walk on. This holiday led us to the decision that it was essential that we have time for ourselves each year. We returned the next year but this time chose the end of March and stayed at Harmony Hall and played golf at the Belmont. We enjoyed our time there so much that I applied for a position there but was unsuccessful because we had four children and their manse had only two bedrooms.

While in Courtice we got our second dog. Freckles came from the pound. But one night, while tied to the clothes line outside the back door, he got into

confrontation with a skunk. What a smell! We tried bathing him in tomato juice, as instructed, but to no avail. We couldn't get rid of the smell, so back to the pound he went. But then we had this postcard with a picture of a puppy which we fell in love with but had no idea what breed it was. At the bottom of the picture was the name "Dandie Dinmont" which we thought was the name of the photographer. Then one day, scanning the paper for sale ads, looking actually for West Highland Terriers, we spotted an ad for Dandie Dinmonts. We phoned the number but were discouraged by the price quoted, but were persuaded by the voice on the phone to at least come and take a look at them. Thus we met Ann Macbeth, Queen Anne of the Skyline Pub, and her daughter Mike. They lived in the Guild Inn subdivision in a beautiful home. We almost drove away, but didn't and found them to be truly down to earth. We sat on the living room floor and played with the pups. They were adorable – but the price! So we asked if they even had a dud. It so happened they did – a male pup that had difficulty on his feet. He had got stuck in the birth canal and they thought he had some brain damage. We bought him for \$50. A few weeks later we were watching the Stanley Cup play-offs in the living room with the pup, the children were outside playing and Mary Ann was ironing when there was a scream. We went dashing out to see what had happened. When we returned we found the pup had bitten into the electric cord and was out cold. I massaged his heart and with a little artificial respiration he eventually came around. But from then on he began to develop normally. In a very short while he was doing all the things a puppy usually did and grew into a very handsome dog with a blue-gray coat. We called him Hamish.

In the spring of 1968 I received a letter from Bill Meadows, Chairman of the Pastoral Relations Committee at St Paul's United Church, Port Arthur. In due course I accepted the call and we moved to the Lakehead at the beginning of July of 1968. This was not an easy decision for we had grown very close to a lot of families, perhaps too close. I was finding it particularly difficult when close friends died and I had to conduct their funerals. In addition my involvement with industry and other aspects of community outreach were not seen as part of the church's ministry. Thus this call, with its emphasis on outreach, seemed right.

B) THUNDER BAY – St Paul's United Church

When we arrived in Port Arthur we lived first in a duplex as we took time to decide whether to live in rented accommodation provided by the congregation or

take a living allowance and find a place of our own. Our decision was to buy our own home. This was not easy. But eventually we bought a new house on McComber Crescent. The Builder, Sakiamer, finished the basement for us. Mary Ann's parents provided us with money for a down-payment, some basic furniture and eventually we obtained an NHA mortgage from the Bank of Nova Scotia as my own bank, the Commerce, whose manager was the church treasurer, believed buying a house was a foolish thing to do and I would lose money. He was proved very, very wrong. We never regretted the decision though it meant finding extra money each month as the living allowance didn't cover the payments. But it wasn't long before the Director of the Special Medical Unit at St Joseph's hospital spoke to me when I was visiting patients and suggested that, as she was retiring, Mary Ann should apply for the job, which she did and was accepted.

At St Paul's David Searfoss was the senior minister. There was a full-time musical director, Susan Englehorn, and John Bawtenheimer was responsible for christian education. But owing to some misunderstanding of my role in the team, John left before I arrived. As an Associate Minister I shared the full range of responsibilities – preaching once a month, visiting the elderly, hospital visiting, youth work, as well as leadership training for outreach to the community.

Soon after I arrived I met a small group of members who were concerned about the urban renewal that was taking place in the downtown area of Port Arthur. Claude Smith and the Heges were members of this group along with several others. It was decided that a drop-in centre should be the first step. A store was made available to us by the city and, after a good clean and a coat of paint, it was opened. Staffed with volunteers from a number of the local churches, it was open from nine in the morning till ten at night and provided coffee and sometimes snacks. Christmas dinner each year was provided by Sister Lila Greco, head of the hospital, with a number of her colleagues cooking and serving. As time went by we developed a walk-in medical clinic and an employment agency. The hope was that a hostel could be built as part of the urban renewal that would provide adequate shelter for the men and women we were serving.

Another project was the organising of Telecare which provided a telephone counselling service, but we also provided one-to-one counselling at an office in the downtown as needed.

I joined the Lakehead Social Planning Committee and was initially Chairman of the Housing Committee which looked at low income housing in the area and the need for green space for the children as well as increasing the number of units

available for low income families. Lois Wilson was President. When she left Thunder Bay I was elected President and served in that capacity until 1972. During the research by the Housing Committee it was discovered that one company owned all the available land around the city for home building. The same company owned the major supply company for building materials, and the city's lawyer was a director of that company. When this hit the newspapers there was quite an uproar.

One of my concerns that had its beginnings here was the need for a one-stop shopping centre for people who are in need of social services. Wayside Centre, run by Presbytery, was an attempt at this with one social worker seeking to deal with the variety of problems that people had from welfare to housing to health care.

We arrived at the time of amalgamation of Port Arthur and For William. The main controversy was over the name. The ballot gave three options: Lakehead, The Lakehead and Thunder Bay. The first two together had by far the most votes but Thunder Bay won.

While in Thunder Bay I attended the Ecumenical Institute in the Chicago ghetto. There I experienced a family order, the Spirit Movement. Families dedicated to the renewal of the communities through an educational program that combined an understanding of the Christian faith in modern terms with worship and the rebuilding of community life. The centre had been established by the American Council of Churches under Bishop Matthews. I returned to Thunder Bay and organised several week-end gatherings where the courses were taught, and worked with Sister Mildred of the Avila Centre.

We also had a concern for native people, a number of whom were in and out of the drop-in centre and some of whom had chemical dependency problems. One of our projects was to bring a group of native children from Rainy River who had never been off the reservation and introduce them to the city. The first night one of the children was arrested for having ridden a bicycle he found in the park across the street from the church – the owner of it reported it stolen. On the reservation there is no such thing as private property; everyone has the right to use whatever there is.

Mary Ann was enjoying her work at the Special Medical Unit which was a program for those with chemical dependencies. They had a 75% success rate. It brought her into contact with AA, Al-Anon, etc. I helped out with Fifth Step. At the time we left the unit and moved into the former nurses' residence and became the Smith Clinic, Mary Ann was given a gold medallion by the local AA group.

One day Mary Ann was approached by the social worker at the hospital concerning a young woman from Nova Scotia who had arrived in town, unmarried and pregnant, and needed a place to stay until her baby was born. She stayed with us for several weeks.

The children were enjoying school, the girls in Elementary School and Phil in High School. The girls continued with music lessons, school choirs and school plays. They were involved with Explorers at the church. Phil was into hockey in a big way, playing for Port Arthur Bear Cat Organisation. All his equipment was supplied, including new skates, moulded to his feet, every year. He was MVP in his final season.

The whole family enjoyed outings to the ice runs. We used our toboggan to go tearing down the chute, out onto the ice of the bay. Tubing, the use of huge inner tubes to pile on and then slide down the hill, was also a lot of fun.

One of our memorable moments was when Dr McClure, Moderator of the church came to Thunder Bay. We were fortunate to have him to dinner one night, and what an evening it was!

While in Thunder Bay I was able to take a number of correspondence courses from Princeton on Counselling, the Old Testament, and Biblical Theology I also served on the Board of Thunder Bay Community Residences, the Mayor's Task Force re a Detox Centre. I was a member of the Children's Aid Society, the Lakehead Association for the Mentally Retarded and Chairman of the Clergy Division United Appeal.

I was also Convenor of the Evangelism and Social Services Committee for the Presbytery and Chair of the Congregational Life and Work Committee, a member of the Camp Board and a member of the Wayside Board.

One of the benefits of preaching once a month was that I could concentrate on a particular topic and begin to do a better job. This was enhanced by the work of the church secretary, Cori, who spent one summer getting a filing system going for me which enabled me to put my hands on relevant material much more quickly.

Our house being new, I plunged into landscaping the grounds. I joined the neighborhood group in a fencing spree. We decided on a common type of fence and worked together to build it and shared the cost. Then I planted a number of shrubs around the borders and some trees. In the bottom left-hand corner I built a small ornamental pool with a waterfall made of amethyst stone. At the front of the house I planted a clump of birch trees, a rose garden in the centre of the lawn and shrubs under the front window.

Hamish, our Dandie Dinmont terrier, was still with us, and we decided he needed a companion so we bought a Dandie pup from Mike Macbeth and named her Della. This led to us getting into the puppy business and for a number of years we became Glamis' northern arm raising a number of litters who were distributed throughout Canada. I was the midwife. We had a very large laundry room near the family room with easy access to the garden via a wooden ramp, but what a mess the pups made of the lino!

With both Mary Ann and I being so busy it was increasingly important that we take time out for ourselves. Each winter we managed to get away for a week or two, visiting Freeport, Grand Bahama a couple of times, and Barbados. Summer holidays we spent with the children in our RV. The East Coast was on our agenda with a visit to Prince Edward Island as well as seeing Mary Ann's family in Toronto.

It was also during this period that we felt called to answer a Today's Child ad in the Toronto paper. There were a brother and sister who needed a home. They were the age to fit into our family. We had always wanted to have six children but after Elizabeth was born we were not blessed with that privilege. These two would have filled out our family perfectly. This was the third time we had tried to adopt. There had been Nancy in Kingston. We tried again when we were in Courtice. Third time we hoped to be lucky. But it was not to be. Our application went in and we were assured by the local Children's Aid that there would be no problem. But there was a mail strike. By the time our application reached Toronto another family had been chosen.

However, after a brief honeymoon, there was growing tension in the congregation... my addition to the staff had not produced the financial results they had hoped for. Every year the deficit grew bigger. The day came when the Chairman of the Board, with the Chairman of Presbytery, asked me to hand in my resignation. I refused and demanded that such a decision should be made by the Official Board. The Board supported me. Then David told me privately that he was going to accept a call to Winnipeg so things would work out. But then he changed his mind. So I began sending out resumes, something I had never done before as I believed that I had been called by God and, when the time came, a call would come. This was the way it had worked up to this moment. But Thunder Bay is a long way from anywhere. Pastoral Relations Committees were not prepared to travel that far. Through the efforts of my father-in-law I was given an interview at St James Bond in Toronto. But the successful candidate's mother was in the congregation.

After 18 months I was surprised by a telephone call from a Bob Hunter who had flown into Thunder Bay for a meeting. He was from Sudbury and wanted to talk to me about the vacancy in his home church. He spent an evening with us and I said we would think about it. Sudbury was not a place I wanted to live. The church was a challenge – a new building with \$150,000 debt and the congregation not able to pay the interest. But I was needing to leave Thunder Bay. I had not applied for this opening so perhaps it was where God wanted me to be. But Mary Ann was enjoying her work. The children were comfortable. How could I uproot everybody?

I agreed to fly down to meet the committee. Then when they phoned back to say they were unanimous we decided to take a trip with the RV and visit the community. The congregation treated us royally. The children were taken off to visit the schools and other youth interests. Mary Ann and I were entertained by members of the congregation and shown the community facilities. When we returned home the children were unanimous and so I accepted the call. Sister Lila, Mary Ann's boss at the Smith Clinic not wanting to lose her, suggested that she should stay behind but fortunately that did not happen.

Housing was the next question. They had a manse but were willing to sell it and give us a housing allowance. The problem was to find a house with four bedrooms in the new Sudbury area that was within our price range (our housing allowance was \$200 a month). I eventually found a house on Berkley Court. The asking price was way out of our range but the real estate man said to make an offer as the owner was very anxious to sell. So I made what I thought was a ridiculously low offer and returned to Thunder Bay. Then on Mary Ann's birthday, July 29th, the real estate agent called to say that our offer had been accepted.

Before leaving Thunder Bay I was asked to meet with the Mayor, Saul Laskin, who presented me with a plaque thanking me for my service to the city. It is one of my most reassured keepsakes.

C) ST STEPHEN'S ON THE HILL, 1972-1989

We left Thunder Bay at the end of August to commence our ministry in Sudbury as of September 1st. We set out towing our trailer one lovely evening and then disaster struck. We fishtailed and discovered that we had lost a bearing in the trailer. We had five hundred pounds of amethyst rock in the rear locker! We had to leave it in Nipigon. We were faced with a dilemma. Because of this delay

we couldn't hope to get to Sudbury in time for the closing date. So we put Mary Ann on the bus for Sudbury while we unpacked the essentials from the trailer and re-packed the station wagon. Then we drove through to Sudbury. Mary Ann had arrived in time to get the key, etc but then slept on the floor of the empty house.

It was a two-story house, referred to by the neighbours as the "big house" as all the others were bungalows. There were double doors on the front with the left side fixed. This opened onto a narrow hall with stairs on the left leading up to the upper floor. The living room was on the left, a long room the full width of the house. A large eat-in kitchen was at the back, with a small dining room on the right hand side of the front door. There was a large family room with a fireplace, the chimney of which had not been finished properly, behind the two-car garage.

Upstairs there were four bedrooms and two bathrooms. The master bedroom with an *en suite* was at the back of the house with a door opening onto the flat roof of the garage. Catherine had one of the front bedrooms, Phil had the other and Susan and Beth shared the fourth.

The longer we lived in the house the more we discovered why the previous owner had been so anxious to sell. He had built it himself with much of the material coming from the building sites of the homes he was building elsewhere in town. However, it was a comfortable house and we enjoyed our years in it. It was within easy walking distance of both the public school and the high school.

We were amazed how quickly the children adjusted to the change. Phil was going into grade thirteen and claimed afterwards that he made more lasting friendships in that one year than in the four years in Thunder Bay. He joined the Wolves Organisation and played juvenile hockey for their farm team in Azilda. Cathy started High School here and quickly made friends playing ringette. Susan and Beth both played in the concert band at High School. Sue was very active with CGIT.

Mary Ann initially was employed with the district Health Unit and then the year they went on strike went to teach at the University School of Nursing for eight years before returning to the Health Unit.

As I said earlier the congregation's situation was a challenge. With the selling of the manse we were able to begin to pay back interest and principle on the mortgage to a point where we were able to see the possibility of making regular payments from current income and the eventual burning of the mortgage.

It was also a congregation in which the session had a very clear understanding of the importance and meaning of infant baptism. Parents were required to be active members of the Church before bringing their children into

membership through baptism. Similarly, couples wishing to be married in the Church were required to participate in pre-marriage counselling and be in a pastoral relationship with the congregation. This was also what I had been taught was the United Church's position when attending Theological College. It was very refreshing.

It was a busy time. Marriage preparation, adult and teen membership classes, Bible Study both in the day time and in the evening. Sundayschool teacher training, Elder training, parenting classes as well as the preparation for Sunday worship to meet the needs of a full church every Sunday. At Christmas time we introduced a candle lighting service that we had experienced in Thunder Bay – every worshipper on Christmas Eve was given a lighted candle in a coke glass to take home, symbolic of the Taking the Light of the World into their homes. It wasn't long before we had three services on Christmas Eve and usually two morning services on Easter Sunday.

I was also deeply involved at both Presbytery and Conference as well as National. I chaired the Personnel Committee for Presbytery from 1974-77, was Vice-Chairman of the Presbytery from 1976-77, and Chairman of Presbytery from 1977-79, and from 1980 on was the Presbytery Rep for the Division of World Outreach.

Then at Conference level:

1975-80 Chairman of the Conference Interview Board

1976-79 Chairman of the Settlement Committee

1979 Member, Ontario Task Force on Economic Issues

1982-83 President of Conference

1983-87 Conference Representative Division of World Outreach

1986 Member of Local Arrangements Committee for the General Council

While at the National level:

1976-80 Member, National Pastoral Relations Committee

1984-97 Member of the Executive, Division of World Outreach

1989 Member of Area Committee for Asia and the South Pacific.

I was also involved in the local community:

- Member of the committee responsible for organising the Sudbury Health Council
- Member and Chairman, New Sudbury Community Service Centre

- Member of the organising committee for the Pastoral institute of Northern Ontario
- Co-ordinator, Sudbury Church & Industry Committee
- Telecare Counsellor

The idea of a one-stop shopping for social services led to a number of meetings with colleagues in other denominations. Our plan was to have a number of neighbourhood centres, possibly in churches, where people could go to find the help they needed whether it was welfare, housing, health care after release from hospital or other institution, employment, etc, instead of having to run all over town to the different agencies. It would have been like a wheel with a central hub to coordinate the services, but with the services being provided in local neighbourhoods. Of course this would mean agencies and bureaucracies giving up some of their autonomy in favour of improving the service to the clients. It seemed like an impossible dream until Charlie Forsythe and the Sister in charge of the Sudbury General came on board, and it wasn't long until the Pastoral Institute of Northern Ontario was born. It had a staff of three and was the central hub. However the idea of local service centres was never developed. Bill Major was our first Director. It had three major thrusts – counselling, both the training of counsellors and the offering of individual counselling, a clinic training component and a social ministry component.

The New Sudbury Community Service Centre was a “people helping people” project, by drawing on the resources of the immediate community to seek to define more fully the needs and/or the problems of the New Sudbury area, then with the co-operation of relevant agencies, interested individuals, groups or clubs, to offer a variety of services based on needs and interests discovered. These came to include family counselling, community educational programs, community action programs and budget counselling.

The Church & Industry Committee looked at union and management issues with a special concern for Inco. Meetings were held with top level management around ethical issues with the view to perhaps establishing some sort of Industrial Mission.

In 1974 the church was gutted by fire. It was started by some children who had gained access to the church illegally and were playing with matches. The fire started in the basement and came up through the floor, blowing out the windows and destroying the roof. Fortunately my study, which was away from the source of the fire, was only smoke damaged and my books and papers were all rescued.

We had just taken out replacement insurance through the National Church's insurance agent.

A rebuilding committee was appointed with Don Dowds chairing and a contractor was hired and by the fall the church was completely rebuilt and refurbished. This was a blessing in disguise as, after some twenty years, equipment such as pianos, hymn books, teaching aids, etc needed replacing but the congregation could not afford to do so. Now we had a rebuilt, repainted facility with all new appliances and equipment. We made a few changes in the interior. The chancel area was opened up with choir pews and organ now moveable so we had a large open space for more flexibility in worship. The pews were also set on a slight angle and a large rough wooden cross was hung on the wall of the chancel in place of the window that had been there. We were thus a people who gathered around the Lord's Table at the foot of the cross. The colour scheme was such that, with the carpeting, the sanctuary had a much warmer feeling. While the work was going on we worshipped at one of the public schools. We had hoped to have chairs instead of pews but this was voted down by the congregation.

St Stephen's being in a suburban area experienced a lot of movement in and out of the congregation. On average we lost 50 families a year as husbands were transferred, but we also gained as many. In 1972 we had some 400 members; ten years later we had received 400 new members, but our resident membership was still 400.

In the first years we had an active Youth Group under the leadership of Tom and Connie Hiscock. Then Tom decided to go into the ministry and from then on it was hard to keep the group going. The CGIT and Explorers and Tyros were all strong and active groups. There was a good nucleus of UCW women. And eventually a Men's Club was established.

Mary Ann and I planned and led Parenting Workshops for Parents of Teens, Parents of public School Children, and Parents of Pre-schoolers. The latter was the most poorly attended.

One day Glen Sauve brought to our attention the needs of a teenager, Tim. He became a member of the family for several months.

When my father eventually retired from Blackstock at age 73, at some point during his retirement he and Elaine came to live with us. We had renovated the basement of the Bercley Court house so that there was a bedroom and a bathroom down there. Dad and Elaine were given the master bedroom and Mary Ann and I moved to the basement. Dad was much in demand as a guest preacher

around the Presbytery but, after a while, there was growing friction. Dad's ideas of what teens should and should not do came into conflict. He wanted to be head of the house, the patriarch, but that could not be. I had been out from under his authority since the age of fourteen.

After Christmas in 1976 at which my sister Mary and her friend Vicki were able to be with us, we rented a motorhome, picked up Dad and Elaine in Port Perry and Mary Ann's folks in Toronto and headed non-stop for Boynton Beach in Florida for Phil and Carol's wedding. Phil had met Carol during his first term at Queen's University. He stopped in Toronto to introduce her to the Tolmie grandparents during the first reading week. They wondered whether she had any relatives in Canada. She said her grandparents lived in Chatham, Ontario. At this it was mentioned that the Tolmies had just received an invitation to a 50th wedding anniversary for a Smith in Chatham – it was her grandparents. Thus it appears that Phil and Carol are third or fourth cousins. She had spent time at the Glen, the Tolmie family farm, as had Phil, but their paths had never crossed before.

While work kept us both very busy, we always spent our summer holidays with the children as long as they were living at home. We continued trailering for a number of years and, after chartering a sailboat out of Midland for a week, we fell in love with a 25 ft Bayfield we called *Reverie*. She was docked at Little Current at Boyles Marina. This led us to establishing Bay Charters and, for a number of summers when we were not using her, *Reverie* was out on charter and helping to pay for her expenses.

Our first summer we did our initial exploration of the North Channel, sailing from Little Current to Harbour Island where we sat out a rather stormy couple of days, and then on to Gore Bay, then on to Bayfield Sound where once again we experience strong winds and had to shelter behind an island for the night before we could continue to the head of the inlet and enjoy a couple of pleasant days at the marina there. Then to Meldrum Bay before crossing the channel to the north shore and explore a number of bays before heading home.

One summer holiday we spent three weeks on *Reverie* travelling the inside channel from Little Current to Parry Sound and back. In Bay Fin we lost an anchor and had to borrow one from Mr Evinrood, the owner of a 150-footer that was also in the "pond" as it was called. In the Bustard Islands we couldn't get an anchor to hold and so had to tie bow and stern to the shore, a tricky operation during which we almost ran afoul of *Flying Gull*, the owner of which came over later with a catch of open mouth bass. Leaving the Bustards we had a heavy wind but, because of the rough seas, we couldn't find the buoys that led into

Beaverstone Bay. We turned back for the Bustards and were planing at about ten knots with the dinghy threatening to come over the stern rail.

Among our favourite spots were Oak Bay, the Crokers and a little bay at the back of La Cloche Island.

Like many boaters we got bitten by the two-foot-itus bug. Seeing an ad for a Bayfield with a pilot house, we went down to Bayfield and visited the yard and saw *Pilgrim*, a thirty-two footer, built by Ted Gozzard as a prototype for his new line of Gozzard sailboats. She joined our fleet and both sailboats were now available for charter. A memorable part of that summer was when the children joined us, all but Catherine, and we cruised the two boats together, Beth skippering *Reverie* with Sue and Randy while Phil and Carol joined us on *Pilgrim*. Then we found a buyer for *Reverie*.

The trip up from Bayfield with *Pilgrim* was unforgettable. We left in perfect weather but ran out of diesel before we got to Kincardine. I had been told that the tank just needed topping up which to me meant it was almost full, not almost empty. Thus we got air in the lines and we had to learn very quickly how to bleed a diesel engine. Then the day we left Kincardine heading to Tobermory it was flat calm for a while and we motored, though the engine kept having to be bled. Then the wind began and we sailed for a while, but it increased in force until we were running before it with only a flying jib and doing ten knots. Visibility was down to about two miles and we had difficulty finding the entrance to Georgian Bay and the channel into Tobermory. Fortunately we spotted it just in time and cruised in only to discover that when we started the engine to dock the accelerator was stuck and I couldn't slow her down. The harbor was packed but fortunately some boaters, aware of our situation, caught us as we flew into the dock and prevented any major damage.

On another occasion we were in the Crokers when we discovered that the injectors had become plugged and we had to get a tow into Little Current. The Browns on their boat *Meltemmi* took us in hand and on a calm day took us back to Boyle's yard.

Despite the various problems we enjoyed many weeks of peaceful bays, clear water and sandy beaches, a great way to relax after the busy lives we were leading in Sudbury.

We also planned a two-week break each winter, usually in January before the congregational annual meeting. It was a study time for both of us. We bought package tours which gave us an apartment in whatever island happened to offer the best rates. We visited Barbados a couple of times, Guadaloupe once, Antigua

once and St Lucia once, had several visits to Jamaica, once to Montego Bay, and then several years to Ocho Rios, and a visit to Nassau. We did our own shopping and meal preparation except for a couple of years when we stayed in the villas above Ocho Rios where maid service was included. Most of the day would be spent reading with time taken out for an occasional swim and a walk.

Eventually the church mortgage was paid off and we had a big celebration as we burned the mortgage. The question was where do we go from here? Would it be possible for me to get the congregation to change direction from their complete absorption with paying off the mortgage to an outreach program?

Duplex envelopes had been introduced after a struggle by first using a separate envelope every month for those who wished to contribute to the Mission & Service Fund. When givings to local expenses did not go down, the duplex envelope was eventually tried for a year and proved successful, i.e. regular givings were not harmed.

A twinning with a congregation in Jamaica, one in which my father had served some years before, was attempted. I went down to work with the current minister for two weeks and to see if we could co-operate on some project helpful to them. We made plans to set up a craft workshop which would employ young people and perhaps develop a market in Canada for their products. Shortly after my return there was a change of ministers there and the new man was not interested in continuing the relationship.

I soon came to the conclusion that St Stephen's would not grow any more unless there was either another staff person to carry some of the load and to reach out to the non-churched in the community or we developed a core of volunteers who would exercise this type of ministry. A group of us attended a workshop sponsored by the Evangelism department of the national church called *Telling my Story, Sharing my Faith*. We returned full of enthusiasm and began a series of evening sessions in which we role-played a variety of situations that participants might meet as they went from door to door. But that was as far as the folk would go.

We also invited the Woodberrys from the Ottawa Religious House (Ecumenical Institute, Chicago) to lead us in a visioning weekend. This was very successful. A number of ideas came forward and a banner was designed that for many years hung on the communion table. It depicted a church on a rock with flames around it with the motto "Faith is refined by fire". But once again the ideas were still-born.

Once the children left home, Phil for Queens in 1973, Catherine for Western in 1977, Susan for Toronto University in 1978 and Elizabeth for Queens in 1979, we decided it was time to move to a smaller house. Our home on Bercley Court sold quickly and we bought half a duplex on Magnolia. Now, for the first time in many years, we had no mortgage. The front door was on the side with a study on the left beside a single-car garage. A small family room was on the right. The stairs were straight ahead. On the second floor there was a large L-shaped living/dining room, a very small kitchen and three bedrooms.

It wasn't long before we did some renovating. The family room was gutted to reveal a huge rock in one corner. We put in a patio door in the back wall and built a greenhouse with a small potting shed attached along the back of the house. We did the door first and that first spring the run-off from the hill behind us had the water almost half-way up the door. We had to run a sump pump inside to keep the level down. I re-did the walls, new framing, gyp-rocked it and did the crack filling including the ceiling, with help from Mary Ann. The rock we turned into several pools with a waterfall. The greenhouse produced fresh tomatoes in February.

In the fall of 1980 Mary Ann's father became ill and within a very short time he was hospitalized and died. He said goodbye to each member of the family and it seemed, having done that, closed his eyes and moved on. My own father had been ailing for some time. I tried to get down to Port Perry as often as possible. On one such trip, having just passed a transport, the car fishtailed and threw me into the line of oncoming traffic. I headed for the far shoulder and made it, but the lead car did the same thing and collided with my rear fender. It was a very close shave. Dad died on Easter Saturday 1981. I conducted Easter services at St Stephen's and then Mary Ann and I joined the family in Port Perry.

It was during our time on Magnolia that Alan, our last Dandie Dinmont, sickened and died. Lady Baby who had joined our family while we still lived on Bercley Court and gave us several fine litters of pups, developed back problems. Despite an operation in Guelph and the recovery of her mobility, her disposition was becoming very unpredictable. She got into a fight with Alan while I was out of town and on my return we decided that she would have to be put to sleep. And so, for the first time in many years, we were without a dog.

Mary Ann's mother decided to move to Sudbury. The house in Toronto was sold, some furniture distributed and some brought to furnish an apartment close to the downtown core of the city. She entered into the life of the complex, made a number of new friends and seemed quite content with the change but the day

came when it became more and more difficult for her to manage on her own. So the decision was made that she should come and live with us. This would mean a move for us as the house on Magnolia was not suitable. We bought a house a couple of blocks away on Drummond. It was an open concept home with a large entrance hall, a few steps up to the living room on the left which flowed around into a dining room and kitchen. The family room with a large fireplace was on the same level as the entry. There was a bedroom and bathroom on this level which became the granny suite. There were three bedrooms on the second floor and a huge walk-out basement with a sauna room and a wood-burning stove.

It was a pie-shaped lot with an area of woodland and backed on the conservation area, part of which flooded in the spring. The woodland area was alive with birds and often in the winter time snow buntings would swarm in. With the help of fill from the widening of La Salle Blvd I built up an area at the back of the lot with railroad ties and developed a vegetable garden which produced abundantly.

Mary Ann's mother wasn't happy. We were both away all day and often in the evenings and she had little company. And so, after a particularly difficult period, it was mutually agreed that she should move to a seniors' residence. Once installed she adjusted beautifully. She had company when she wanted it and could be alone when she wanted to. The staff were excellent and she was usually content and happy.

One day our breeder, Mike Macbeth, called to ask us if we would like another Dandie. There was one in Maryland that was in need of a home. So she was flown up on spec. She was supposed to be a ladies' dog. But from the first moment she arrived she snuggled up to me and quickly became a member of the family. Elmira of Muchintown, Mira for short, stayed with us until she died in Orillia. She was not a show dog but produced several Canadian champions before she retired.

Eventually I came to the conclusion that I was unable to break the congregation out of the lethargy that had developed after the burning of the mortgage. A change was needed. So in 1985 I put my name in circulation as one looking for a change in pastoral relations, i.e., looking for a call. When in the fall of 1986 nothing had happened, I noticed an ad in the Observer regarding an exchange to New Zealand. It was lunch time and I passed it across the table to Mary Ann. We looked at each other and said, "Why not?"

New Zealand was one place in the world I had always wanted to visit but, because of the distance, I never thought it would be possible. So, without further

ado, I answered the ad. We received a response from Chris Bedford to the effect that ours was one of the three offers. We quickly put together a package of promotional material extolling the virtues of the community as well as congregation facts and figures.

We heard nothing for several months. Then at the end of December of 1986 the reply came – they would accept our application. Then to my dismay a few weeks later we received a call from St Andrew’s United Church in downtown Calgary wanting me to accept the position of Senior Minister with a staff of four. We also received an offer from Beaverton. Both of these we had to turn down as we were committed to the exchange.

And so it was that in September of 1987 we began a new adventure.

Chapter Eight

NEW ZEALAND INTERLUDE

We flew to Toronto with two huge suitcases each and had a visit with Susan and Randy and their children before flying on to San Francisco where we spent a couple of days seeing the city. Then it was an evening flight to Hawaii and a couple of nights there; time to take a tour of the island and the city and walk on Waikiki Beach. Then we flew to Fiji where we enjoyed a Blue Lagoon cruise for five days, visiting a number of the outer islands including the one where the film *Blue Lagoon* was filmed. The water was wonderful, so blue, and the sand and palm trees breathtaking. We met a very nice couple from Sydney, Australia. The husband was an “old boy” from Kingswood School in Bath before the war. We visited a native village, snorkeled among the reefs and barbecued on the beaches. It was a special time for us both. Back in Fiji we had time for a quick visit to the capital. I had hoped to make contact with one of the local chiefs who had visited us in Sudbury a year or two before but they were in the middle of a *coup* and so we were unable to see him.

But it was time to head for Auckland where we were met at the airport by Stan Sweetman who drove us to Morinville in the Waikato. He dropped us at the manse so that we could unpack and get a little settled before being picked up by Klaus Kloeten who drove us to the Camerons’ farm for supper. Peter Cameron

was the Clerk of Session, and a sheep farmer. His wife Marion was a school teacher who served us a wonderful meal of hogget, one-year-old lamb. We also met their three children, Ian, Bruce and Eileen.

The manse was 34 Cobham Drive. It was a comfortable three-bedroom house with a study just inside the front door. There was an eat-in kitchen with a small cozy sitting area and a large living room with a fireplace. There were grapefruit trees and a fig tree, lemon trees, passion fruit vines and a small vegetable garden. Along the sidewalk was a row of beautiful roses.

It was just a short walk to the church which was located on Canada Street. It was a new building, no steps anywhere, and had been built while the congregation was under the interim leadership of a Canadian minister, the Reverend Bob McCrae.

In the grounds was an olive tree that had been grown from a cutting brought from the Mount of Olives in Israel. It was a Church of Scotland (Presbyterian) congregation with only 100 members, in which the Session was the authority.

Morrinsville was the main centre for the Waikato Valley which is primarily dairy country. Thousands of Holsteins covered the valley floor. Farms were usually 150 to 200 acres, milking anywhere from 150 to 300 cows. Milk went to processing plants where most of it became powdered milk for export. Morrinsville had a big milk processing plant which we were able to tour during our stay. There were also large stock yards.

We arrived in the middle of September which is the beginning of spring. With no central heating, we found the house cool and so an electric heater was provided so that we could sit close to it with our morning coffee and watch the children on their way to school, many in bare feet. The exchange arrangement was that we were given the usual day and a half plus an extra day per week for seeing the sights. Thus we were able to travel extensively. Early in our stay we went to Christchurch for their national gathering of church leaders. We drove to Wellington and took the ferry to the South Island and then along the coast road to Christchurch. This gave us a good view of the Alps and the huge river beds, almost dry at that time of year, that run from the mountains down to the coast and were full of lupins in bloom. Following the Conference we continued down the coast for a while and then cut inland to get a closer look at Mount Cook, and then crossed the Crown range to reach Queenstown. This was a spectacular drive. Going up the back side of the range was easy though it was a gravel road with no guard rails. It didn't seem very steep. However we arrived at the top to find

ourselves at some 5,000 ft with almost a sheer drop to the valley below. The road down was narrow and winding, not wide enough for two cars to pass. Fortunately we only met one lone cyclist.

We had a beautiful day to visit Milford Sound. We took the boat trip out into the Tasman Sea under almost clear skies and beautiful sunshine. The various peaks stood out against the clear sky. The waterfalls were spectacular.

Then it was on to Dunedin and a look at Stewart Island in the distance and then back along the coast road to Christchurch and on to the ferry for North Island.

Christmas in New Zealand was a little different. There was a carol sing in the Morinsville Park one evening with the Salvation Army band and the gathering sitting on deck chairs or on rugs on the grass. There was carol singing with the Youth Group on a very wet night. Christmas itself was very quiet as this is the beginning of summer holidays for the community and those who had *bachs*, that is summer cottages, were away. Camping, hiking and other outdoor activities are extremely popular. Decorating was at a minimum. We had a few evergreen boughs and lights on the mantel and that was it.

We had company from home. Beth had joined us while she waited to get her own green card to work in the United States. Marilyn Pritchard, our Maid of Honour, had come for a holiday. So on Christmas day we headed out for a beach and a swim. While there are many, many beaches, the wind was blowing and the sand flying, so the trick was to find one that was sheltered. We eventually did and had a swim. Week by week we explored different sections of North Island, including Hamilton, our nearest large city, as well as Auckland. One day we set out for the Bay of Plenty. We had planned our route which would take us from there to Napier and back to Morinsville. It didn't look too far on the map however it was very hilly between the Bay of Plenty and Napier and driving for us was slow. So it was that the sun was setting as we drew near to Napier and, not wanting to face a mountainous drive in the dark, we took a motel. This meant a phone call to the folk back in Morinsville as Mary Ann had a women's group due to meet at the manse the following morning. On our return we were greeted with a very large poster with a number of pictures and comments about our lack of expertise with New Zealand maps and roads. However a side benefit was that we were able to see more of Napier and in particular their beautiful rose garden with some 2,300 different varieties of roses.

Roses are a New Zealand speciality. Every Sunday morning New Zealand's "Mr Rose", Alan Scott, presented us with a freshly picked rose to wear. Then on Rose Sunday every member of the congregation was given a fresh rose.

The congregation made us very welcome. Every week there was at least one invitation to have dinner with one of the families. On our arrival there was an initial run of funerals, then it evened out. There were a few weddings. Regular Session meetings and a Bible Study Group as well as morning and evening services. During the year we ran a very successful Parenting Workshop.

We also had partial responsibility for a community church at Petatonga, a small rural community some half an hour away. We shared the preaching responsibilities with the Baptist Church in town. Allan and Maureen Fullerton were one of the key families there. We also got to know Malcolm and Jill Clarke and Gordon and Estelle Bowman, enjoying a wonderful New Year's Eve with them all.

Raye Davison was the Church Secretary and was an invaluable help in seeing that things ran as smoothly as possible. Her husband Harry was a dairy farmer as well as a very active member of the Session. We spent a summer day with them during the haying season and watched their calfateria in action. That is a big round bowl with teats in the side from which a number of calves could drink at the same time. While they were all in shorts and shirt sleeves and the women in summer dresses, we were in sweaters, still finding it a little on the chilly side.

Flower arranging was another specialty in the congregation. Every Sunday there was a fresh bouquet of flowers, beautifully arranged, picked from one of the many gardens lovingly tended by members of the congregation. This was also true for weddings and funerals. There was always a coffee time following morning worship in a large vestibule area between the sanctuary and the Christian Education wing. This large hall was used for bake sales, rummage sales, pot luck suppers. The first time we went to one we were a little confused. We were told to bring a plate? We discovered this meant a main dish! There was the occasional social evening filled with fun and games. A congregational hike in which David Dyer led us – a hike which entailed crossing the same stream at least 6 or 7 times. There were no bridges, sometimes a log across, most of the time we waded through.

One of the many remarkable people we had the privilege of getting to know was Rosa Pascoe. When we were there she was 84 and joined my Bible Study Group, and was a great contributor to our discussions.

In visiting some of the young farmers in the congregation we discovered that they did not inherit their farms. They all began in the same way, working for a dairy farmer until they had saved enough to put a down-payment on their first herd of dairy cows. Then they moved to a farm, the owner of which provided the land and machinery necessary while the young farmer provided the cattle, and they split the milk cheque. Then after a few years, when the cows were paid for, he would use them as collateral for the purchase of his own farm. The aim was that within 25 years his farm would be debt free and, if he wanted, he could then semi-retire, allowing another prospective young farmer to use his land. It seemed like an excellent idea. I wonder sometimes what might have happened if I had emigrated to New Zealand to farm instead of to Canada.

New Zealand is truly a land flowing with milk and honey. Apples, oranges tangerines, lemons, kiwi fruit, grapefruit, strawberries, blueberries, raspberries all grow in abundance. When in season we picked strawberries and blueberries which grew on bushes that were 6 feet high. We enjoyed the passion fruit from the garden, made jam, froze some berries and bottled fugi fruit that grew in the garden. It is also a land that was going through some inner turmoil as the Maoris were seeking a just settlement of their land claims. The social safety net all New Zealanders had enjoyed for many years was being taken apart. Unemployment was growing, crime on the increase, health care was being privatized. The poor were growing in numbers and getting poorer, while the wealthy minority were growing even more wealthy.

In one of our expeditions we had discovered the Bay of Islands. We bought our first time-share there, the *Bishop Selwyn*, a one-bedroom floating wreck, for ninety-nine years. The first time we used it Beth came with us. We just got settled when Cyclone Bola hit the North Island and we were marooned for three days, with roads both to the north and south of us flooded. It was a restful three days. We could do nothing outside so we read, listened to good music, ate of course and watched the wind and driving rain out in the bay. On another occasion I was able to play a little golf on a nearby course and also take a day sail out among the islands. The countryside of North Island will never be forgotten, from the miles of sand and sand dunes to the sweeping bays and the little coves, to winding hill roads with a breathtaking vista appearing at each turn in the road, to the peaceful serenity of the Bay of Islands.

Early in May word came from home that Mary Ann's mother had had a heart attack and wasn't expected to live. It was ANZAC weekend, a holiday. We managed to find one seat on an Air New Zealand flight for the next day. The flight

time we were given was in the afternoon. The Camerons were also flying out to Vancouver in the morning. They had stopped by at the manse to say goodbye as Mary Ann was busy packing and to pick up a couple of bags that we were sending back to Canada with them. Then we got a call that there had been a mistake and Mary Ann was supposed to be on that morning flight. We piled into the car, I drove while Mary Ann tried to finish her packing in the back seat. I have never driven so fast in my life. We arrived just in time to buy the ticket and get her on the plane before the door was shut. Twenty-three hours later she was in Sudbury. Her mother was still alive and with Mary Ann there she came out of her coma and was soon out of danger allowing Mary Ann to return to New Zealand in time for the farewell party as we returned home via the rest of the world.

Chapter Nine

AROUND THE WORLD

This was the dream of a lifetime, something we never thought would ever be possible. But when you head for New Zealand and discover that the airfare around the world is cheaper than a round trip to New Zealand, why not?

From New Zealand we headed for Sydney, Australia. Qantas booked us into a hotel in the Kings Cross area of downtown Sydney. It was handy to all the sights and sounds but we also discovered after we had left that it was the centre of their red light district.

We took a city and harbor tour, visited the Zoo and the spectacular Concert Centre. We spent a wonderful evening with a couple we had met on our Blue Lagoon cruise in Fiji. Then we rented a car and drove to Canberra for a visit with an old school chum, Peter Wood. He and his wife took us to see the Parliament buildings and other sights. Our visit was all too short, just overnight, and we were off again to visit a class mate of Mary Ann's in Sale, Victoria. From there we drove into Melbourne and were able to have a city tour before catching our plane for Hong Kong, a ten-hour flight.

Landing in Hong Kong is an experience in itself. In 1988 the flight path took you between buildings, something no longer necessary with the new airport.

On arriving at our hotel we discovered that Ling, one of the young people we had sponsored years before, had been at the airport to meet us but we had gone out a different exit and missed him not knowing he would be there.

These few days in Hong Kong were very special ones. Back in the sixties we joined the Child Sponsorship Plan of Christian Council of Churches of Hong Kong. Ling was our first child; we sponsored three others in the years that followed. After each sponsorship we kept in touch with these young people and also with the social worker through whom we were able to get together with three of them on this trip. I was wrong. I soon realized that what we had done for them over the years, which cost us very little, was appreciated more than words could ever express.

Ling took three days off work so that he could escort us around Hong Kong. We did many of the touristy things but also went to places that only a local person could have taken us. We ate in a restaurant in which we were the only Westerners and provided much amusement to a number of children as we struggled with chopsticks. We visited an all-night market where all manner of

goods were for sale, as well as a variety of fortune tellers and side shows. We rode the Hong Kong Ferry and were amazed at the number of ships anchored in the harbor unloading their cargoes onto barges. The Hong Kong skyline is breathtaking. The Tiger Baum Gardens were also spectacular. The hours flew by and all too soon we had to bid Ling farewell and catch our flight to Bangkok, Thailand. Ling gave us a beautiful cork carving and a little Chinese tea-set with a package of Chinese tea, gifts that we will always treasure.

The ride in from the airport in Bangkok was accomplished through literally a sea of traffic, cars, bicycles, tuk-tuks (three-wheel powered rickshaws) and thousands of pedestrians. We had thought the streets of Hong Kong were crowded but Bangkok was worse. Our hotel was magnificent. We ate one meal at a Thai restaurant on the premises and were entertained by Thai dancers as we reclined at low tables. We did a city tour seeing the Palaces and the Temple of the Golden Buddha, and the reclining Buddha, and marveled at the ornate architecture, the gold leaf applied by the devout to the Golden Buddha which already weighed some 15 tons of solid gold.

We were in touch with a local young couple through the Division of World Outreach, M. Abdus Sabur, Co-ordinator, Asian Cultural Forum on Development who was organizing labour unions, a very dangerous occupation, and his wife, working with the children born out of liaisons between American servicemen and local women. One was Buddhist and the other Muslim. We spent a helpful lunch with them discussing the local situation. We had hoped that we might be able to see something of their home life, but this was not possible as they had only a room in a relative's house.

Shopping in the city was better than Hong Kong. Prices were lower and the quality appeared very good. One hundred dollars would have bought a couple of made-to-measure silk suits, silk shirts and ties, if we had been in the market.

Then we were on our way to Singapore. What a contrast! We arrived and de-planed in a crowd of other travelers from all over the world. We lined up for a cab and thought we would have to wait for ages but cabs moved in a steady stream to the end of the line, were filled, moved on and another took its place. It was the most orderly, methodical movement of passengers we had encountered.

We had just two nights and three days. Time for a city tour and a harbor tour and a visit with C.T. Thomas and Lucy Matthews, the parents of John Matthews, a colleague in Sudbury. We shared a meal together and enjoyed a visit with them. We had hoped to take a day trip into Malaysia but it was cancelled

owing to a religious holiday and so instead we spent some time at an amusement park on an island just offshore.

Once again we were on our way by air to Athens. It was an overnight flight with a refueling stop in Bahrain. As luck would have it we were a little late arriving in Athens so had to go directly to our tour which took us to Delphi. A great bus trip with an excellent guide and a good walk around the ruins at Delphi and the museum. We enjoyed the bountiful meal, overlooking the Gulf of Corinth. Our hotel had a flat roof which contained a sitting area and a bar with a wonderful view over the city. Our city tour enabled us to see Mars Hill where St Paul preached, the Colosseum, the Acropolis, the University, the Library and the Guards at the war memorial.

On June 5th, my birthday, we took a boat trip to visit three of the Greek islands that lie closest to Pireaus, the port of Athens. This was the most disappointing part of our trip as our tour guide simply dumped us on the dock, gave us our boarding tickets and disappeared. We were surrounded by literally hundreds of locals out for a day's excursion. On board there was no place to sit. At each port of call we could only guess the name of the island for all we understood was the time of embarkation which was written on a board at the end of the gangplank. It was a rather overcast day. The little towns around the harbours we visited were pretty but the hills looked dry and bare. My pictures actually were brighter and more colourful than I expected.

When we returned to our hotel the desk clerk informed us that as of midnight all transportation workers were going on strike. There would be no cab, no bus, no transportation in the morning to catch our plane to Rome. We quickly made arrangements for a cab that evening and got the last one, arriving at the airport just before midnight. We spent the night huddled in uncomfortable seats being watched by soldiers armed with tommy guns. Needless to say, we were glad to be on our way.

Our time in Rome was quite brief. We walked to the Trevi Fountain and threw in our coins, visited the Vatican and ate pizza and drank a bottle of wine at a pavement café. On one of our walks we were stopped by a teenage girl with a couple of younger children in tow, begging for money. As we walked on I realized that the street map that had been in my hip pocket was no longer there. Fortunately we carried our money and passports in a belt around our waist.

Our tour took us to Naples, Pompeii – what an amazing place – we marveled at the paved streets, the indoor plumbing, the bakery, the laundry, the

garden courtyards, the paintings on the walls, and shuddered at the disaster that fell on this thriving community so suddenly.

We moved on to Sorrento and the Bristol Hotel where to our amazement we had a room with a balcony that overlooked the Bay of Sorrento. It was a breathtaking view. We were joined here by two Australian young women, the Heavenly twins, Mary and Sylvia Heavens. The four of us were assigned a car and driver for a tour to Amalfi. It was a spectacular drive along a cliff road with view after view unfolding around each curve in the road. Crossing one very deep ravine that opened to the sea, we could see homes cut into the cliff face.

The following day we took the boat to Capri and spent the day exploring its picturesque streets, town square and cliff walks as well as a trip by small boat into the blue grotto. You must lie down in the bottom of the boat while the boatman pulls you through the opening, hand over hand, on a cable that threads the small entrance. Inside one of the boatmen with a great voice serenaded us with a little opera.

Then it was back to Rome.

We continued our journey via an overnight train to Zurich. We arrived at the station in good time and found our correct platform. A porter suggested the place on the platform to wait so that we could board the train in the correct car for Zurich. However when the ticket collector came around after we had boarded and were underway, we discovered that we were in the wrong carriage. At the next stop we had to change carriages. The seats reclined and so we were able to get a little sleep.

On arrival in Zurich we went to our hotel and then contacted our tour company only to discover that there was only one other couple who had signed up for this particular coach tour. However, the tour was still on. The owner's daughter drove us in a Mercedes. This made it a rather different tour as we were able to stop when and where we pleased to take pictures, to have a coffee, etc.

While in Zurich we took our usual city tour, a boat trip around the Lake. We worshipped at the International Church and met a minister friend from the Bay of Quinte who was visiting his daughter who worked in the Canadian Consulate. We were also able to attend an opera.

On leaving Zurich we followed the lake shore to Lichtenstein where we stopped for coffee, then on to Innsbruck for lunch and a quick look at the city. Then it was on to Salzburg. We were able to wander through the old town, seeing the Church of St Peter featured in the wedding in the *Sound of Music*. We also visited the Von Trapp Estate and sat in the summer house. We visited

Birchesgarten and the Eagle's Nest, Hitler's mountaintop aerie from which you see into Austria, Italy and Germany. Then it was on to Vienna where we visited the Schonbrunn Palace with its ornate, gold-covered chandeliers and hidden passageways so that the servants could feed the fires to keep the rooms warm without being seen by the residents. One evening we all went out to a vineyard for dinner and some wine tasting. Parking was impossible, so our driver parked at a No Parking area, saying it was cheaper to pay the fine. However part way through the meal she was informed that the police were towing the car away. This caused a little bit of concern. It was here that I discovered that the song *Eidelweiss* from the *Sound of Music* was not an Austrian song at all. It had been written by an American just for the film.

We ended our tour in Munich. We had intended to stay just the one night as our plane for Paris left the next day, but when we phoned to confirm our reservation we discovered that while we had been travelling this flight had been changed. So we had to book another night which gave us the opportunity to see more of Munich. But it meant that our time in Paris was cut short. However we managed a city tour and a river tour as well as an evening at a Cabaret, seeing all the major sights.

From Paris we went by train to St Malo on the French coast. We arrived in time for a stroll around the town to see the wall that surrounds it and to have a light lunch at a little café before taking the hydrofoil to Jersey and then on to Guernsey. We were able to stay in a guest suite at Les Blanc Bois, my stepmother Elaine's condominium complex. We toured the island, introducing Mary Ann to the houses I had lived in and the schools I attended and the beaches where we swam, as well as an evening with some of my friends from years before. The five days passed all too quickly and it was time to fly on to England where we had booked an RV for three weeks.

We rode the double-decker bus from the airport into downtown London, sitting on the upper deck. We had the one night in the city and then took the train to the suburban area where we were to pick up our RV. It was a Volkswagon camper van with very little storage space for all the luggage we had been carrying with us from New Zealand. Fortunately we were able to leave much of it in a storage facility at the RV centre. The driver's seat and the passenger's seat behind it folded down to make one bunk and similarly on the other side. They were very narrow and most uncomfortable. Before we headed off we stopped at the local pub for a steak and kidney pie, something I had been looking forward to for a long time.

We headed south through Kent, heading for Igtham where my mother grew up, looking for the graveyard where she was buried after the war. We found the village and the graveyard but searched it to no avail for the grave stone. The rector had the family name in his register but not the exact location. We went on to look for the village where one of my school chums lived. We found it and the cottage but there was no-one home. The countryside was still showing the ravages of the monster storm that had hit the south of England some months before, knocking down countless trees. We drove on to the coast, stopping in Bexhill on Sea where my grandfather had lived and where our family had holidayed in August of 1938 and 1939. The overcast and rainy weather that began that day seemed to dog our path. The day's drive would see us just escape from it by evening and then it would catch up to us the following morning.

We drove and camped along the south coast, looking for another old school chum in the Weymouth area but to no avail. We drove down to Portloe to see the village I had spent that last summer holiday in in 1945. It had not changed. Then on to Penzance hoping to see another class mate but only to discover it was his older brother. At school we only used last names and nick names which don't show up on Old Boy lists kept by the school. Then we drove along the north coast of Cornwall and Devon and into Somerset and a visit to Glastonbury and Wells before heading to Bath and a look at my old school. Then it was on to Worcester and a weekend with my sister Margaret and the Bedfords from New Zealand (our exchange family) whom we had not met before and who were heading home travelling around the world in the opposite direction from ourselves. It was a treat to sleep in a proper bed for a couple of nights.

From Worcester we headed for Northampton and a visit with John Mordin and his parents, then to Nottingham for an overnight visit with Grace. Then we drove up through Rutland and paid a visit to Uppingham, then on to Scunthorpe and a visit with Arthur Jackson at Home Hall as well as Ruby. *En route* we visited the Ketchells and Gladys and Harry Welsh, friends of my father.

Then it was through the Yorkshire Dales, Herriot country, to the Lake District and into Scotland to Glenrothes where we worshipped in St Margaret's Parish Church and visited St Ninian's, the parish I had helped get on its feet in 1959. We also visited Glamis Castle and the parish church where I had preached and spent some time in St Andrews before heading south again along the east coast of Scotland and England as we headed for London and our return to Toronto.

SUDBURY AGAIN

We returned to our home and congregation in Sudbury to find our church family in turmoil. In our absence the General Council of the United Church had passed a motion affirming the fact that no-one who was a member of the church, regardless of orientation, was barred from applying for ordination. We spent many weeks organizing information meetings in the congregation, seeking to assure members of the congregation that nothing had changed. No-one had ever been excluded from applying. Anyone who did would have to be recommended by a local session, they would have to satisfy the Presbytery, the Conference, the Interview Board that they possessed the moral, ethical and spiritual requirements as well as a call from God to ministry. Then before ordination there would have to be a congregation willing to accept them.

One of the continuing challenges was to move the congregation towards new goals. We discussed the possibility of an elevator to make all floors of the church accessible to the handicapped. We also discussed the possibility of building a seniors' apartment complex that would be linked with the church building. This would require buying back the manse and then include an elevator that would link all floors of both buildings. A committee was formed and a plan developed including plans for such a building drawn up by Alf Kettle, a member of the congregation.

Then one day we had a call from Jean Johnson in Bayshore Village a community not far from Orillia we had visited several times, to tell us that their minister at St Paul's had just resigned and would I be interested? After much prayerful consideration I sent in my resume. The weeks passed and I heard nothing. I was not surprised after my previous attempts to get a call.

Then out of the blue in early May I was asked to go down to Orillia for an interview. Mary Ann and I drove down and I met with a large committee for an hour or two. I shared with them my position on ordination of homosexuals on infant baptism, on marriage and church membership, on the mission of the church and all other questions they posed. As I sat in the car following the session Mary Ann asked me how it had gone. My impression was that my thoughts had not been well received and I did not expect to hear from them again. Then one Sunday morning in June we had a large number of visitors. I thought it was returning high school grads for a local reunion. It was not until I was shaking hands at the door that I recognized Tommy Moffat who had been the Secretary of the Committee, and then the penny dropped. But still nothing was said. They did not ask to meet with me so once again I thought the issue was dead.

That summer I sent resumes to a number of congregations that were looking for ministers, including Espanola and Beaverton, as well as some in the Bay of Quinte, but to no avail.

July came and we were packing the RV for a trip to the east coast. The night before leaving the Chairman of the St Paul's Pastoral Relations Committee called to say that it was a unanimous decision that a call should be issued to me. Would I accept? I said that before I could do that I would need to meet with their Associate Minister to see if we could work together. So we planned to stop in Orillia on our way to the East Coast.

We spent an evening with Laurence Wood and his wife at their home which we noticed was for sale. We were assured that they had no intention of leaving St Paul's but they had bought a house in one of the new subdivisions. We discussed the work and how it could be shared and came to what I thought was an amicable and workable relationship, so we decided to accept the call. However, when November rolled around and the time came to begin our ministry at St Paul's we discovered that Laurence had accepted a call to Orangeville and had left the week before we arrived. In retrospect I don't think I would have accepted the call if I had known Laurence was leaving. At the same time I think it was where God wanted me to be at that point in my life.

We spent the next ten days camped at Hammock Harbour while we notified the St Stephen's congregation of our decision and looked at houses. The only suitable place in our price range was in Bass Lake Woodlands. This was an act of faith as we had not listed our home in Sudbury and had no idea what we might get for it. We then spent the remainder of our holiday time in Eastern Ontario.

On our return to Sudbury there was a message on our answering machine to the effect that they had heard we were moving and would like the chance to buy our house. They came to see us, agreed to our asking price and it was sold.

The final weeks at St Stephen's were difficult. We had been there for seventeen years. Our lives had become so intertwined with so many families as we had struggled with them through births, confirmation, teen traumas, weddings, sickness and deaths. We had been part of their struggle with an overpowering mortgage which we paid off in ten years, a fire that gutted the church. They had supported us through the death of our parents and shared with us a twenty-fifth wedding anniversary party planned by our children. They gave us a wonderful party recorded on video, a collage of pictures and a purse. Tears were shed on that final Sunday morning.

ST PAUL'S, 1989-1994

We arrived at our new home, 1367 Confederation Drive, John driving the motor home and Mary Ann the car, late at night, to find our builder putting the finishing touches to it. We bedded down in the driveway and were ready and waiting for the moving truck the next day.

The most impressive feature of our new home was the front entrance which had a bench on each side that could be sat upon while shoes and boots were put on or off. The second most impressive feature was the sitting room off the master bedroom.

The living room was long and narrow, to the left of the front entrance, which led into the dining room. The large kitchen was at the back with a patio door opening onto the back yard. There was a small family room on the right-hand side of the entrance with a fireplace on the left-hand side of the hall. Upstairs along with the huge bed-sitting room were two other bedrooms and the main bathroom. There was a large two-car garage.

It was not long before the back yard was fenced so that Myra could roam freely. Grass was planted, flower beds dug, fruit trees planted and a vegetable garden established. A deck was soon added off the rear patio door. The basement was finished with a family room and a laundry area.

St Paul's is a large downtown congregation with some 800-900 families on the books. The church was at the corner of Peter and Coldwater in the heart of the city. It had been established by the Methodist saddle-bag preachers who had begun missionary work on the Indian Reservation at Rama. The buildings had grown over the years, pieces added and some subtracted. Its red brick exterior, dull and rather crumbly in places, was far from imposing in contrast to the stone Anglican church across the street or the well-preserved red brick Presbyterian just up the street. However, when I entered the sanctuary that first Sunday morning, walking alone, following the choir's processing into a packed church, it was like a dream. There was an incredible feeling of peace and calm. My inner turmoil was stilled and, as I entered the pulpit for the first time, I felt at home.

As I look back those first few months had a dream-like quality. I met so many people, there was such a back-log of work (some thirty couples had been booked for weddings) with so many families and I was alone. I don't think I could have survived if it had not been for Pauline Rideout, the church secretary. She pointed me in the right direction, kept me up to date with the essentials that had to be taken care of and, with her ear to the ground, let me know who needed to be seen right away and what could be put off for a while. I discovered I had jumped from

the frying pan into the fire. St Paul's, under the leadership of Ken Barker, had been a hotbed of anti-United Church sentiment over the ordination of homosexuals. Ken had left to join the Presbyterian Church, leaving behind a badly divided congregation from which, I was told, many had left the fold to join the Presbyterian Church up the street. Here I was, faced with a congregation who were used to having a staff of three ministers as well as the full-time music director.

My study was in behind the organ pipes. It had no windows and the bats or mice, I was never absolutely certain which, could be heard moving around in the ceiling. Pauline found a discarded electric typewriter for me to use. However I soon decided that for my own peace of mind and health I would do my sermon and worship preparation at home on our old Macintosh computer.

Within the complex there were three large meeting halls, a large number of Sunday school rooms, a library/resource centre, a parlour, and a church office. It was a busy church with Scouts and Cubs, UCW units, a Couples Club, a Pairs and Spares Group as well as three choirs. Canadian Club met there along with a number of other community groups.

The congregation was organized with an Executive Committee, Church Board and a variety of committees. At the first meeting of the Trustees the question was raised about the ownership of the building. If the congregation broke away from the United Church, could they keep the building? The reality that the buildings were owned by the United Church of Canada did not sit too well with some Trustees.

Gradually things settled down. The staff met weekly to discuss responsibilities and upcoming activities, as well as planning for the future. The Board met monthly and soon set up a committee to look for an associate for me as the people I had contacted as possible associates had just made moves and were not available. It was a slow process. There were few applicants. We interviewed two and the committee decided on Mary Vipond. I had some reservations, more a feeling than anything specific. But as in the past I had always been able to work with the women of the church, I went along with the committee as they were unanimous. I was given to understand that the reason Mary had left her previous place of employment was because she had had a breakdown, which I interpreted as due to stress and pressure of work.

But it was not long before I discovered that she considered all males to be patriarchal chauvinists. Thus life became extremely difficult. At the same time she

was seeking to have her job description changed and giving the M&P Committee, especially the Chairman, a hard time.

I had reached the point where I was seriously considering seeking a change of pastoral relations when she decided to leave her husband and children to live with a married lady of the congregation whom she had been counselling. The Presbytery and the Conference Personnel Office were called in and, after some tense negotiations, she agreed to resign. However it was done behind the scenes with none of the relevant facts being brought out into the open. I felt that many of the congregation, especially those with whom Mary had worked closely, thought I was to blame for her leaving.

It was some time before another Pastoral Relations Committee would be set up to search for a new associate.

It was a busy life. Mary Ann was working at the Health Unit. We were members of the Couples Club and Pairs and Spares. I attended as many committees as possible, visited the hospital weekly and the nursing homes as well as many of the elderly shut-ins. I avoided taking on responsibilities at Presbytery and Conference and took only the funerals of those connected with the congregation. My insistence that couples wishing to be married at St Paul's should take counselling and be under the congregation's pastoral care led to some criticism. My belief that infant baptism should be reserved for the children of parents who had already made their commitment and were part of a worshipping community caused discomfort with some members.

Attempts were made to organize a time for visioning and setting new directions for the congregation. The staff organized a party for the congregation in the hope this might spark other groups to do the same. The youth were involved in some TV production through the local cable station. We tried a School for Christian Living, open to the community and using leaders from the community as well as our own.

Eventually Jack Carbet joined our staff on a half-time basis. We needed a full-time person but the Finance Committee would not authorize it as we were running in the red. Jack was basically responsible for the Christian Education area as well as sharing in worship.

The fact that the congregation seemed to be marking time and the pressure of work were beginning to get to me. The M&P Committee asked me to keep track of my hours and I reported to them that I was working some 70 hours a week. I received no sympathy nor any sense that they would support giving Jack

more hours to relieve me. So I suggested that I would retire, even though I had two more years to reach 65.

To my surprise, within days the Chairperson of the board was in my office wanting my letter of resignation to be handed in within the week. I was deeply hurt and disillusioned.

After some months it was eventually decided that Jack should act as interim and Dave Allen would work with him. The congregation became involved in a visioning program and positive planning for future programs and directions with achievable goals was set in motion – the very thing I had wanted to see happen three years before.

Life was not all work. There was gardening to do. Every year in January we took a couple of weeks' study leave and headed for Puerto Vallarta and our time-share on the beach. There we sunned, read and swam, shopped at the local market and returned refreshed in body, mind and spirit. Summer holidays found us RV-ing, exploring some new part of the continent, the boat having been sold.

Then in the spring of 1994 as we looked at houses (something we often did in the spring), a neighbor asked if friends of theirs could see our house as they were interested in moving into that area. They made us an offer and so we got serious. More by good luck than good management our present home came on the market at a reduced price and, after some brief negotiations, we were able to buy it, but not without getting a mortgage. It was love at first sight. As we opened the front door and walked into a spacious living room, with a large kitchen at one end and a dining room all in one open space, with windows on the south side which gave a magnificent view of Bass Lake, we knew this was our dream home. It had an apartment on the lower level which also had a wonderful view of the lake. It was set in two acres. There were two bedrooms and a study on the main floor. We moved in on June 15th. Our first company arrived from New Zealand a couple of weeks later.

On the last Sunday of August 1994 I preached my last sermon at St Paul's – *The Church Is What You Make It*. There was a farewell reception in September which was videotaped. To my delight my sister Margaret was able to be with us from England, as were the other members of our immediate family, except Elizabeth.

As I look back over those five years, while I still remember the heartaches, I also remember the many fine people I had the privilege of getting to know and working with. We still see some of them as we worship at St Paul's but some have moved on to a higher field of service.

Chapter Ten

RETIREMENT YEARS

In my last sermon as I retired after nearly 40 years since I preached my first sermon in what became Garden Hill United Church in Montreal North, I said, "When one has been called to ministry in the Church of Jesus Christ, as I was, our role may change, as mine does today, but it never comes to an end." In retirement the question is, "What is this new role?" Or, to put it in a slightly different way, "What am I going to do with the rest of my life?" As I waited for some clear direction I busied myself with the challenges that were on my doorstep.

We had moved to a new house on a two-acre lot overlooking Bass Lake. I drew up a rough plan of what we would like to do with our property. The first priority was the front entrance to the house. The flagstones were taken up, the earth removed and replaced with gravel and sand and I laid an interlocking stone walkway with Allan blocks edging to make two flower beds, one on either side. A vegetable garden was prepared and plans were made for the planting of fruit trees.

During that first winter Mary Ann continued to work at the Health Unit and I designed and built three arbours for the lower garden and planed the lower patio and a fenced area in which Mira could roam freely.

In January I flew out to San Diego to spend a few days with Beth and then she drove me to Escondido and the Lawrence Welk Resort for which we had exchanged our Puerto Vallarta units. Mary Ann joined me for the second week and then we moved to the Coronado Beach Club for a week.

In the spring I fenced the lower garden with cedar two-by-fours and trellis, set the arbours in place and built gates for them, and dug flower beds on three

sides. Then there was the east side of the house to terrace with Alan blocks (70 lb a piece) and steps down to the side door.

In July Mary Ann retired from the Health Unit. The Unit had a party for her the family came home and were joined by many friends for a party at the house.

We had talked of motor homing around the continent in our first year of retirement, heading for BC early in September and then down the west coast and along the south to Florida and back home, visiting with family and friends along the way. However, for a variety of reasons, we put it off and then I was called by Collier Street in Barrie to see if I would help them out while they were between ministers. I agreed to help out until the middle of November when our revised scheduled called for us to head south.

Collier Street United Church was a congregation that was associated with a group of Covenanting Churches opposed to the General Council's position on ordination. There were two services every Sunday and an early Communion Service once a month. On staff was an associate minister responsible for education, a visiting minister, two secretaries and a full-time custodian as well as a music director. I was asked to preach, do some hospital visiting and to generally keep a steady hand on all the activities. It was my first experience of being on TV on a regular basis.

It was during the fall that I learned that my sister Mary, who was living in Salmon Arm, BC, was fighting cancer and had decided not to have an operation. Elaine stopped on her way through to visit with Mary. I talked frequently with Mary on the phone over the next several months. My brother David and his wife Jeanette were now living close by in Lumby.

Towards the end of November we headed south for Florida with the motor home (Pilgrim). We stopped in Ormand Beach for a brief visit with Sally and Eugene Coke and then went on down the coast to Fort Lauderdale and a trip to Grand Bahamas where we stayed for a couple of days at the Princess Hotel. This came about from filling in a card at the Home Show in Toronto and was supposed to be in exchange for attending a time-share presentation in Fort Lauderdale. We discovered there were some costs involved. While on Grand Bahama I was able to make contact with some members of the Rose family whom I had known in 1950 when I was living in Nassau.

On returning to Florida we drove from Fort Lauderdale to Key West with the car, a long day's drive but worthwhile. We were amazed at the number and length of the bridges that connect the various islands. We then followed the Taminani Trail to Naples, seeing only one crocodile in the Everglades. Then it was

north to Dunedin and to New Orleans for a couple of days of sightseeing. The RV required a new set of tires.

As we travelled westward we stopped for a couple of days in Houston and enjoyed a visit to the Space Centre. We got there at the opening bell and were there till it closed.

Travelling on to San Antonio we developed engine trouble. It was missing badly and losing power so that we just limped into the campground. It was going to require a major overhaul! Regrinding of the head, new plugs, wires, etc. We moved into a motel overnight.

Once more on the road we headed to Phoenix. From there we visited the Biosphere. Then it was on to Palm Desert before heading into San Diego to spend Christmas with Elizabeth.

In March we headed north along the coast road, a leisurely drive as some parts were very narrow and winding. We had a lay-over at Malibu because of rain and washed out roads. We enjoyed our visit in San Francisco and were amazed at the damage a recent wind storm had caused in the park around the Gold Gate Bridge.

We admired the giant redwoods and the magnificent coastal scenery. Pictures were few and far between owing to the few places we could pull over as our overall length was 48 feet.

We arrived in Vancouver to cool and wet weather. We managed a quick trip between snowstorms to visit David and Janette in Salmon Arm. We caught up with a number of old friends in Vancouver and then headed over to the Island to Port Alberni and drove a car to Bamfield for a visit with some of the folk there. We also visited Qualicum Beach before heading to Victoria. We had hoped to see Dick Pardy, my engineer from the Mission Boat days, but he had died just a couple of weeks before we got there. Spring was just arriving. The trees were in blossom, though Butchart Gardens was still a little drab.

Then it was back to Vancouver and time to head south again. This time we took the Interstate. After a brief visit with Beth we headed east. The RV was once again acting up, the occasional pop became more pronounced. At Quartside, a little village which normally mushrooms to a city in the winter time, we pulled into a small RV repair shop. After their lunch break, the young mechanic quickly diagnosed our problem – a cracked spark plug.

We arrived in Phoenix in torrential rain with no reservation. Each Park we came to was full. Eventually we found a place for the night. Next day we phoned a list of parks with no luck until the last name, View Point. It proved to be a new

park with paved roads and a golf course. We enjoyed a very pleasant stay, one that was to be repeated.

We returned to Orillia in April. This was to be the winter routine we followed for a number years. Summers were spent tending the garden, golfing at Wibley's World just south of Orillia with Mary Ann and also with friends from St Paul's. We worshiped at St Paul's and continued to enjoy the fellowship of the Couples Club and Pairs and Spares. I did summer supply at Regent's Park UC and Westmount UC in Orillia and served on the Outreach Committee at St Paul's. We were also involved with Voices For Children and Dr Mustard's concern for the first five years of a child's development.

Then on the suggestion of an old school friend I flew to England to attend a special school reunion at Kingswood in Bath to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the school's return from war-time exile in Uppingham. I incorporated this with a visit to Guernsey to see my stepmother Elaine and then Worcester to see my sister Margaret, before heading to Bath only to discover that my friend was a no-show. I flew home from Birmingham.

At the end of November, as the snow began to fall in Orillia, we headed out with the RV, following our customary route to Florida to visit with Mary Ann's aunt and uncle, Sally and Eugene Coke, before hitting the I-10 heading for San Diego, stopping at all our usual campgrounds, to spend Christmas and New Year's with our daughter Beth.

I remember making marmalade for three days with fresh Seville oranges from an orchard in Arizona.

After three weeks in Puerto Vallarta we returned to View Point RV Park in Arizona. We enjoyed golfing at the Park, took a CPR course, enjoyed the desert in flower after heavy rain, attended a seniors' EXPO at the Arizona State Fair grounds and a soap-box derby at View Point.

We attended Velda Rose United Methodist Church which held three morning services, all packed with line-ups to get in – excellent music and preaching.

We started home at the end of March. On April 2nd, as we were leaving a service centre on Rte 66 just outside Oklahoma City, we were hit head-on by a pick-up truck that lost its brakes coming off Rte 66. The front end was demolished, Mary Ann was hit in the nose by the Woodalls Camping book and had a nose bleed. Fortunately there was an emergency vehicle at the truck stop. After a quick trip to the hospital and the RV towed to a storage yard, we were able to load the Saturn that we towed and head for home, arriving on April 5th.

The insurance company claimed it was a write-off. Eventually we were able to replace it with an older, used RV.

In July we drove to Norfolk, Virginia to visit with cousins, Don and Joanne Tolmie, and then on to Ormand by the Sea to visit Sally and Eugene, staying at Marine Terrace in Daytona. We returned home via the Blue Mountains Parkway, a beautiful drive.

At the end of August we were able to gather with a number of friends from St Stephen's On the Hill at Stan Lynch's cottage on Manitoulin Island.

Mary Anns diary of this summer reminded me of the day when a hummingbird hit the kitchen window. I went out immediately to find him lying on the deck. I picked him up and held him close in my hand, stroking his back. After a few moments his eyes opened and then shortly after he was able to fly away. A special moment.

From November to April 1998 we followed our usual routine – Florida, San Diego, Mexico, Arizona and home.

In May till June we revisited England. We enjoyed visits with cousin Hugh Thomas and Pam Dodds in Guildford, then to Guernsey with cliff walks, visits to Herm and Sark. Back in England we were joined by cousin Anthony and my sister Margaret as we went to see my mother's grave in Ightham, Kent and my grandparents' home at the former Basted Paper Mill.

We then drove north to Uppingham in Rutland where my school had spent the war years and then to Nottingham to visit with Grace who had been my mother's helper from 1935 till 1939. We drove through the Derbyshire Dales to North Lancashire to see Beryl Hibbs, my stepmother's sister. Then it was on to Skye to visit Mary Ann's cousins, Lorna and Des Andrews. We returned to the Lake District to a B&B in Ambleside via Inverness and Dunblane, St Andrews and Glenrothes. We had a quick drive around the various Lakes, especially enjoying Fell Foot Gardens. Then it was back to Worcester to pick up Margaret and head for Cornwall where we had booked an RCI Unit at Camborne. It had three bedrooms so Jane and Colin and their children Meg and Sam were able to join us for a week.

We visited a tin mine, Lands End, Penzance, the ancient village of Chyscutter and thoroughly enjoyed the scenery and beach time. Back in Worcester Margaret took us into Wales to see Hay-on-Wye, famous for its used book stores and then through the Black Hills to the ruins of an old monastic community. At the end of June we flew home from Birmingham.

During the summer we had visits from Cathy and her children, Sara, Julian and Gabby. Our garden was on the Orillia Garden Tour. And then we had a visit from Allan and Maureen, our friends from Petatonga in New Zealand.

In September, hearing that Sally was not well, we headed for Florida, visiting cousins in Virginia and Carolina on the way.

At the end of November, once again as the snow was beginning, we headed south. We camped at Sunshine Holiday Camp, played golf at Tomoka Oaks and visited with Sally and Eugene. Just before we left Sally had a lung biopsy which showed she had lung cancer. She decided against treatment. She wanted to die at home and also asked us to be there when that time came.

We continued with our normal routine – San Diego for Christmas, Mexico and then to Casa Grande. We enjoyed a couple of days in Sedona. The colours and rock formations were magnificent.

We returned to Orillia in April and then in May we had a call from Sally to say that she felt the end was near. She met us at the door and then went to bed. We stayed at a motel and were at the house every day. During this period Eugene took me aside and went over his investments and his will, though I was not his executor who was a nephew in Winnipeg. To our great surprise the house was to be ours and the ownership was transferred while Sally was still able to sign the transfer. There would also be a share of the rest of the estate.

Sally said her goodbyes and slowly drifted into a coma and died peacefully as she wished. Eugene was grief stricken and did not want to let her go.

There was to be no funeral service, not even a memorial service. She was to be buried in their crypt in Peterborough. I travelled back with her to Canada and was there for the interment.

On my return to Daytona I discovered that I had been travelling on Mary Ann's passport.

It was not feasible for us to move to Florida to look after Eugene. As Sally had done everything for him, we felt he couldn't be left in the house alone, so we looked for a retirement home. He would have liked to have gone to live with family in Winnipeg but they wouldn't have him. But before any arrangements could be made, one morning he did not answer our knock. Thinking he was still sleeping and not wishing to disturb him we left. Later in the day when he still did not answer, we unlocked the front door and went in to find him in bed but in a coma. We called the ambulance and he was hospitalized but died a few days later. I flew back with him for the interment in Peterborough. On my return we

closed up the house, having made arrangements for grass cutting, etc. for the summer, and returned home.

During the summer (1999) there was time for family along with gardening and golf. A visit to Queen's for the Theological Conference, the planning of a tour to Oberamergau in 2000 for the Passion Play.

We had been in contact with the Rostad Tour Company for a number of years. They recruited clergy primarily to host tours to the Holy Land and then they extended their offerings into Europe. As a host, one recruited and for every 7 or 8 recruited to travel you received one free ticket. I had been uncomfortable doing this while in the pastorate as I felt it would be too much pressure on members of my congregation. Now in retirement that sort of pressure would no longer exist. We were teamed up with the Gabourels, a Jamaican couple living in Toronto.

On our return to Florida in November we found there had been some damage to the house from a recent hurricane. This led to the installation of storm shutters on all the windows.

That winter we also added a bay window with a window seat so we could watch the birds come to our feeder. We planted an orange tree and a grapefruit tree in the garden.

We were undecided as to whether we wanted to spend the winters in Florida, leaving our home in Orillia which is in the snow-belt. I had never looked forward to winter and had had enough of the snow. We returned home still undecided.

In June we left for our European Tour. Among our passengers were friends from the congregations in Courtice, Sudbury as well as Orillia. We had 18 confirmed passengers; the Gabourels had 21. It was a great group of people. We spent time in Rome, Florence, Verona, Venice, Salzburg, Vienna before going to Oberamergau and the Passion Play, then via the Romantic Road to Frankfurt. It was a memorable trip, excellent hotels and food and knowledgeable guides. From Frankfurt, five of us flew to Jersey in the Channel Islands and island hopped as I showed them where I had spent the war years, seeing the sights of Jersey, Guernsey, Alderney, Sark and Herm.

The year 2000, being Canada's bicentennial year, we decided on celebrating this event by a return trip to New Zealand to see the friends we had made when we were there in 1987/88. Just before leaving we had a telephone call from Bamfield concerning the death of one of our friends who had died on his fishing boat. So we planned a stop-over in Vancouver. We drove over to Vancouver Island and to Bamfield for a brief visit with his wife, and then down the island

visiting other old friends, to Victoria. We enjoyed the island drive and the coast around Victoria.

As we continued our flight to New Zealand we talked about how much we liked Victoria and wondered whether a move there might be a solution to our dilemma.

In New Zealand we spent time with friends in Auckland as well as in Morinsville, preached at Knox and had a few days at the Bay of Islands, one of our favourite places there. We returned home via the Cook Islands, Los Angeles and San Diego to see Beth.

That summer I was invited to be summer supply at Sparrow Lake Community Church, in cottage country just north of Orillia. They were open from June to the middle of September. In November we returned to Florida and, as we had decided over the summer to move to Victoria, we put the house on the market. It sold very quickly and the closing date was the end of March. We held an estate sale, loaded what pieces of furniture we wanted into a U-Haul and the car on a dolly, and returned to Orillia in April.

We flew out to Victoria for a week to look for a house. Our real estate agent lined up possibilities for viewing in the afternoons and we looked on our own in the mornings. We found our home on Pearce Place at the east end of Newman Road in Saanichton. We made an offer that we could afford and to our surprise it was accepted. It was a two-storey with three bedrooms upstairs and a suite on the ground floor. We had a wonderful view of ocean and islands.

On our return to Orillia our house sold quickly. Closing date was the end of August. We drove west the last week of August so that we would be in Victoria for our closing date there. We went via Timmins to have a visit with Susan and family, visited in Thunder Bay, Winnipeg, Brandon, Calgary and Salmon Arm. We settled in that first week in September and then flew back to Ontario to preach at the 50th Anniversary of St Stephen's on the Hill in Sudbury. That was just after the 9/11 terrorist attack in New York City. It was a memorable occasion, a packed church, sit-down dinner in a marquee in the parking lot, and catching up with many friends.

On our return we decided to make Cordova Bay United Church our spiritual home. We had worshipped there one Sunday when we had been looking for a house. We had been met at the door by Gerald and Dorothy Nelson from Port Perry and who had known my father when he was the minister at Blackstock. We found them to be a very friendly congregation and we felt very much at home. We quickly became involved in their many activities. I served on their Outreach

Committee, arranged for speakers at their Men's Breakfast, and we both enjoyed the activities of the Couples Club. Mary Ann joined the Auxiliary of the Saanich Peninsula Hospital and soon became their President. I was invited to join a men's golfing group at the church and for the next few years I golfed once a week with them all year round.

That first winter I began re-doing the garden. I had the gravel removed from both sides of the long driveway, replacing it with good topsoil. I planted a few trees and bulbs. I prepared flower beds around the edges of the back garden and eventually planted fruit trees – pear, apple, plum and fig – as well as roses and a variety of perennials. The following summer I built an interlocking stone path along the side of the house.

We drove to San Diego to spend Christmas with our daughter Beth and then flew to Mexico for three weeks.

The summer of 2002 we enjoyed visits from a number of friends from Ontario and New Zealand, as well as my brother and his wife from Lumby and my sister from England. Then in August we had the opportunity to get to know first our granddaughters Julia (Phil's) and Gabrielle (Cathy's) and then later that month Sara (Cathy's) and Laura (Susan's).

In September we were contacted by Mike Macbeth, our Dandie Dinmont Club President, concerning two Dandie Dinmonts that had been left at the SPCA in Calgary. Arrangements were made with the family looking after them temporarily to meet in Vernon and so seven-year-old Penny and Copper joined our family.

This winter our resort in Mexico was closed due to a hurricane. Christmas was again spent in San Diego with our two dogs travelling with us by car.

As a member of the Outreach Committee at Cordova Bay I suggested, as a project, we approach the "Face to Face" program of the Division of World Outreach to see whether we could participate and, as a result, Dr and Mrs Mtebe came from Tanzania. This led to a group from the church going to Dedoma in Tanzania to see what they needed. This group became a community-wide organization called "For the Love of Africa" and has contributed to the building of schools, medical clinic and a Technical School.

The summer of 2003 we welcomed more visitors from England and the USA, a visit in April from our grandson Eric (Phil and Carol's son), then in July Julian (Cathy's son) and Rob (Susan and Randy's son).

In September I had a three-week trip to England and Guernsey, visiting Canterbury, the Norfolk Broads and Cambridge on the way to Worcester and a visit with my sister Margaret. Then I drove back to Gatwick via Salisbury, the New

Forest, Winchester and Tunbridge Wells, and then flew to Guernsey to see my stepmother Elaine, and was able to do some cliffing as well as visiting Herm and Sark.

During our third week in Mexico we enjoyed having Phil, Carol, Mark and Julia with us for a week. In May we spent a week at Whistler at the Crystal Mountain Lodge. There were still a few skiers around but it was fairly quiet. We enjoyed seeing the town and the surrounding countryside, taking the ski lift to the top of Black Comb Mountain. We worshipped at the innovative community church supported by three denominations, the building was also used as an art gallery and theatre.

In June we boarded the *Radiance of the Seas* in Vancouver and sailed to Alaska through the Inside Passage. The ship was brand new and equipped with all the latest technology. It could turn 360 degrees on a dime. Also in June our grandson Mark spent a week with us – a great opportunity to get to know him better and catch up with all his activities.

In August we spent a few days in Bamfield, living in the house we had lived in when I was on the *Melvin Swartout*. We did some visiting, renewing old friendships though there were few of the families from those days still there. I preached on the Sunday in what was the Sundayschool hall, the church at that time was a community centre.

In September we flew to Ontario and made the rounds of friends and family, visiting Orillia, Sudbury, Timmins, Lindsay, Sunderland, Millbrook, Uxbridge, Courtice, Oshawa, Bowmanville, Smith Falls and Ottawa. Mary Ann attended her Nursing Class Re-union at the Chateau Laurier in Ottawa. In between times, when at home, we enjoyed symphony concerts, theater, university short courses and lectures, as well as golf and keeping my garden in shape.

2005

In January, while in Mexico, we were joined by our daughter Catherine and her children Sara, Julien and Gaby. It was wonderful to spend time with them all. This was a special year for me. It was the sixtieth anniversary of Liberation Day in Guernsey, so in April I flew to England, stayed with my sister Margaret for a few days during which time we visited the Derbyshire Dales, hiking along several streams and through rolling hills. Then we flew to Guernsey and joined our stepmother Elaine who had arranged tickets for us all for the special service of thanksgiving that the Queen and Prince Philip attended, and also tickets for their walk-around and the opportunity to meet the royal couple. Elaine had also

arranged for a gathering of those who had been at school with us in occupation days at a local hotel and then another gathering at her home. It was great to catch up with folk we had not seen for 60 years. No trip to Guernsey would be complete without a cliff walk and visits to Herm and Sark where Margaret took me to the Hogs Back, an area I had not seen before.

Back in England I took a drive through Kent, visiting a number of famous gardens, such as Sissinghurst and Leeds Castle, before returning home.

In September we drove up to Port Hardy from where we took the ferry to Prince Rupert on the mainland, a 15-hour cruise up the Inside Passage. Despite the fog we enjoyed the scenery. In the fall I was invited to teach a series of classes on the Old Testament. We also took classes in ballroom dancing. In August our daughter Beth moved back to Canada. She bought a house in Sidney and eventually got a job at the Victoria General Hospital.

As the new year approached along with our usual trip to Mexico, and Beth being now in Victoria, we had to arrange dog and house sitters for the time we would be away. Through friends at the church we got in touch with Don and Claire Peters who lived in Calgary. They were delighted to come and continued to do so for several years.

2006

In April we noticed an ad in our local paper by someone who was in need of housing for a couple of months. In this way we met Diane Jones and were able to leave her in charge of the house and dogs while we went to Ontario for Mary Ann's Toronto General Nurses reunion.

We were able to spend Easter weekend with our daughter Susan in Callander. She had recently separated from her husband Randy. We completed the round of family visits and then checked into the Carriage Hills Resort near Orillia which gave us the opportunity to visit friends from our Orillia days. In May we spent a week at a time-share on Lake Shuswap and were able to enjoy visits with David and his wife Jeanette as well as their son Jonathan and his lovely partner Catherine. In July Mary Ann, being in great pain, we went to the emergency department of the local hospital where, after a long wait, she was eventually seen and they diagnosed appendicitis. She was taken by ambulance to the General where X-rays showed it had ruptured. She was operated on within a couple of hours and they were able to remove it with no spread of infection. We discovered what a wonderful caring church family we were a part of.

This year I joined the Victoria Male Voice Choir. I also became a midwife again when Beth's Razzle Dazzle gave birth to six pups. When Beth was at work I was able to feed them and help socialize them. In the fall my PSA started to go up. A biopsy was in order which showed positive for prostate cancer. A consultation at the Cancer Centre in Victoria led me to decide on hormone therapy, to be followed by radiation. I received my first shot right away, radiation to begin when my PSA was down to normal levels.

2007

We enjoyed our time in Mexico, the sunshine, sunsets and walks into the old town. It also was a time to try visualization healing therapy. On our return hormone therapy continued. In May we headed for Guernsey to see my stepmother Elaine. We did not realize that this would be the last time we would see her. Then we toured Ireland in a rented car. We followed the coast roads as much as possible having a brief look at Galway, Donegal, Londonderry, Belfast, Dublin, Cork and both the Kerry and Dingle Peninsulas. The weather was good and the folk were all very friendly.

On our return to England we drove north and spent a few days at Hadrian's Wall and the Lake District before heading to Worcester to spend our remaining time with my sister Margaret. In September we drove east, visiting Salmon Arm, Edmonton, Red Deer and Calgary, catching up with family and friends. Returning home we hosted a gathering of Mary Ann's relatives, Murray and Ann Tolmie from Vancouver and John and Joan Tolmie from North Carolina. We continued to enjoy lectures, gardening and golfing and the activities in our congregation.

By November my PSA was down and so radiation started every day, Monday to Friday, 37 treatments in all.

2008

While in Puerto Vallarta we enjoyed visits from our daughter Susan and her daughter Laura and son Rob. Beth also joined us for a few days.

Back on Vancouver Island I was able to rejoin my golfing group on a weekly basis and Mary Ann became President of the Hospital Auxiliary.

In May I attended the first ever re-union of the Naval Training Division of which I had been a member during university days. And we all paraded to the cenotaph on Battle of Atlantic Sunday. I returned home in time to join the "Wine & Roses Tour" we were hosting to Romania and Bulgaria. We were a party of 22, a mixture of old and new friends, some of whom had travelled with us before. We

visited Bucharest, Siblu, Sinaia known as the “Pearl of the Carpathians”, Bran and Dracula’s Castle. We changed guides in Russe and entered Bulgaria. We stopped in Veliko, turnover capital of the second Bulgarian Kingdom, and then on to Varna on the Black Sea coast. We gathered rose petals in the Valley of Roses and visited a cosmetics factory. Then it was on to Povdif, across the scenic Rhodopes Mountains to Melnik, a visit to the Rila Monastery and on to Sophia. It was an excellent tour, great hotels, great meals, lots of wine tasting.

The only incident marring our tour was when one of our passengers was notified that her mother had died in Amsterdam. Fortunately the owner of the company that had organized the tour was with us and so she was able to make the necessary arrangements for her to get to Holland. We learned much about their history as well as the changes since the “Wall” came down and they joined the European Union.

In September Penny came to the end of her journey. She had been a much loved and faithful companion to Copper, who was going blind, and was also drawing to the end. She was very much a part of our family and was sorely missed.

In October we returned to Ontario for the Annual conference at Queen’s Theological College. It happened to be my 50th anniversary of graduation and ordination.

2009

In January, while we were in Puerto Vallarta, my stepmother Elaine had a stroke and died shortly after. She had been active in her church community till the end. That winter we also had visits from our daughter Beth and Catherine and her daughter Sara.

In May I went to England to see my sister and then over to Guernsey to walk around the island, a little bit each day, thinking this would be my last visit, and seeing the few friends that were still alive.

It was a great summer. It arrived in June and remained with us until the end of September. We had a bumper crop of figs, prune plums and apples, with flowers blooming all summer long.

In July we were saddened by the loss of Copper. We had just e-mailed our breeder in Ontario of her death when the phone rang from her to say that she had a four-month-old puppy that needed a home. She thought he might be good company for Copper. Needless to say Mac came to join us and became very much Laird of the Manor.

In September we hosted a Rostad tour to the South of England. There were 18 of us. We visited London, Canterbury, Dover Castle, Chartwell, Leeds castle, Tunbridge Wells, Stonehenge, Salisbury Cathedral, Exeter, The Eden Project in Cornwall, Lyme Regis, Weymouth and Cardiff. One of the many highlights and perhaps the most memorable was to hear the Welsh Male Voice Choir at Cardiff Stadium. It was their rehearsal night and they gave us a half hour concert (150 voices).

In between times we continued to enjoy the Victoria Symphony, plays at the Belfry Theatre and courses offered by the University of Victoria. My study group at Cordova Bay progressed from the Old Testament to the Introduction to the New and then to Mark's Gospel.

2010

In May we enjoyed another Rostad Tour, hosting 19 old and new friends from Sudbury, Orillia and other tours we had hosted. We started in Frankfurt, stopped in Rothensburg before arriving in Oberammergau for the Passion Play. We toured Regensburg, Prague, Tec and then Vienna where we enjoyed a wonderful concert at the Schonbrunn Palace. Then it was on to Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia, two days in Budapest and then Cracow which included a tour of the concentration camp at Auschwitz, before heading to Warsaw and home. Once again the hotels and meals were great and we had great guides who were informative about history, both past and present.

During the year we added Marci to our family. She was a Pepper Dandie from a puppy mill in the USA that the American Dandie Rescue group advertised on the web as needing a home. When we picked her up in Bellingham she was a bedraggled looking pup. But she quickly filled out and proved to be not only a good companion for Mac but also my little sweetheart.

In July we were back on Ontario to celebrate Mary Ann's 80th birthday with our family.

We had thoroughly enjoyed our home with its views of the ocean but were beginning to realize that we were not as young as we once were and it was time to downsize and perhaps move to a location where we would be within walking distance of all services.

We began looking for a house in Sidney. We were looking for a ranch style but no suitable one was available. We settled on an older two-storey and made a conditional offer which was refused. We put our home on the market and it sold quickly, but a renewed offer which was unconditional was turned down. As our

closing date was December 22nd, just a month away, we settled on our second choice which was a new two-storey home on a cul-de-sac, Swiftsure Place, in Sidney by the Sea. We were now within walking distance of everything, groceries, dentist, doctor, theatre, bank and only a short distance from the airport and the ferry to Vancouver. Two weeks later we went for our annual visit to Puerto Vallarta.

On our return I was soon at work on the small garden planting roses, peonies, delphinium, black-eyed susans and a variety of other annuals.

2011

In May we returned to Ontario for Mary Ann's 60th reunion of Toronto General Hospital Nurses and, of course, time to catch up with family and friends.

In September we celebrated being 80 years young by going on a cruise through the Panama Canal. We were joined by Orillia friends Bill and Rosemary Church who were now living in Victoria. We sailed from Vancouver on the *Coral Princess* to San Francisco, a rough first night at sea, and then it was to Cabos in Mexico. However the sea was too rough to land there and so it was on to Costa Rica where we visited a coffee plantation and a botanical garden which had a wonderful display of orchids. The Canal was a surprise as I had always assumed it would run West-East but, in fact, it runs South-North. We made the transit in a day and then had a stopover in Fuego Amador where we chose a city tour followed by a walking tour of old Panama. Our next port of call was Cartagena where we visited La Popa Monastery, the Gold Museum and had a city tour. Our final stop was Aruba, a very flat island, lots of sand. We took a short taxi tour of the high spots. Then it was straight sailing to Fort Lauderdale.

2012

The major event of the year was the Rostad Tour of Slovenia, Croatia and the Dalmation Coast. Among the highlights was our visit to Lake Bled where our national rowing team prepared for the Olympics, the Vintner Gore with its boardwalk along the edge of the river, Plitvide National Park with its lakes and waterfalls and the massive Postogna Caves, and finally the picturesque walled city of Dubrovnic.

However on our return we were deeply saddened to discover that my sweetie, Marci, had dropped dead while playing with Mac at the park. She was not quite three years old. The memory of her still brings tears to my eyes.

June included a visit with sister Margaret and friends in England. Then in August we attended the wedding of our granddaughter Laura Pickering to Ryan Forget. The ceremony was held in a beautiful garden setting in North Bay. It was an enjoyable weekend catching up with family and friends.

We were also able to pay a quick visit to Sudbury as well as Ottawa to spend time with our daughter Cathy and her family. We ended our visit with a few days at Phil and Carol's at their beautiful home on the shore of Sturgeon Lake.

With the arrival of our new minister at St Paul's I was invited to facilitate Biblical background studies of both the Old Testament and the New, in the light of the most recent scholarship, which led to similar studies of the Gospels of Mark and John.

2013

This proved to be a quiet year. No major travels as we made preparation for the Rostad Scandinavian Tour in 2014. We both enjoyed gatherings centered on Evolutionary Christianity. I joined the Board of Friends of Dominion Brook, a local dog park that had been part of a Federal Botanical Garden and was under renovation.

In March my brother David was diagnosed as having an aneurism on his aorta and was operated on in New Westminster. The operation was successful but within hours he suffered a stroke which led to paralysis down his left side. I made several trips there to visit him until he was transferred to a nursing home in Vernon.

We also added a new member to our household, Minigo, a mustard-coloured Dandie Dinmont, from Calgary. She was not quite a year old. She had some behaviour problems which we hoped she would grow out of but it was not to be. We struggled with her for a year and then sent her back to the breeder.

Then in July we enjoyed the company of a young Japanese girl, Momoko, from Tokyo who was here to learn English. She was a delight, but the time was all too short.

Changes were beginning to take place at St Paul's. In preparation for welcoming some local aboriginals, the chairs were set in a circle. This configuration has remained and enhances the atmosphere for worship.

2014

The major focus of the year was the Rostad Tour of Scandinavia in June. We had not been very fortunate in our recruiting but as we were co-hosting we ended up with a group of 35 wonderful people. We flew to Frankfurt and then on to Copenhagen. After a couple of days we took the ferry to Oslo. It was an overnight trip. I had developed a severe cough and nasal congestion which needed attention, so a trip to emergency in Oslo and an experience of medicine in Norway which was excellent.

Then we travelled to Bergen and then over the mountains to Lillehammer before heading into Stockholm. While the scenery was not as spectacular as the brochures portrayed it, it was a good tour with excellent accommodation and meals.

I left the tour group in Stockholm and flew to London and drove to Worcester for a brief visit with my sister who had been in hospital and was slowly recuperating.

Our visit to Ontario this year included a stop in Kelowna to see our granddaughter Gabbie who was graduating from the University there, and then a visit with David in the nursing home. In Ontario we had the pleasure of meeting our great-granddaughter Emma, born on May 24/14, Laura and Ryan's first-born. A real treasure.

We continued on to Ottawa to meet another great-granddaughter Meara Faye, daughter of Sara and David Mackenzie, born May 28/14. She is an adored baby sister for Iliana and Drayke.

We joined Phil and Carol and their family for a day cruise on the Kawatha Lakes, their gift to us on our 60th wedding anniversary. It was a perfect opportunity to get to know Mark a little better and to meet Eric's lovely partner Sarah. Julia was unable to be with us as she was teaching in South Korea. It was a very special celebration.

2015

We returned from Mexico in mid-February and to our delight we had an early spring. I was able to plant two new apple trees and a fig tree and the usual bedding plants for summer flowering.

At the end of April I began having night sweats, having to change my t-shirt two and three times a night. The doctor put me on an antibiotic for sinus infection. This did not help. Then I had an episode of rapid heartbeat, 15 minutes, and decided I should go to emergency. By the time we saw the doctor it was back to normal. However blood tests were taken and I returned the next day for X-rays.

The ER doctor did not know what was wrong so he referred me to an internist at the Royal Jubilee, a rapid diagnostic specialist.

We had several meetings with Dr Spence and more tests. He decided that it was Temporal Arteritis and he put me on prednisone. This had a number of side effects but did not relieve the pressure in my head. It also led to weakness in my legs and thus made walking almost impossible. I climbed the stairs using my arms to haul me up. This led to more neurological tests, but still no answer. It took a year to get off the prednisone. I was unable to continue with the Bible Study. Nor could I walk the dog or play golf. Fortunately Mary Ann was able to take over the dog walking and we had a gardener come to look after the essentials there.

In September we managed a trip to Ontario. I needed a wheelchair at the airports and Phil picked us up in Toronto and took us to the Lake house which became our base. Susan, Laura and Emma came from North Bay for an overnight visit and we were able to drive to Ottawa to visit Cathy and her family. During the fall Mary Ann took me to Iroquois park and while she walked Mac I started to walk around the football field, day by day going as far as I could. Fortunately I was still able to drive the car – this was much easier than walking.

2016

While in Mexico I continued to walk most days with my poles. Fortunately I was able to find places to sit along the street as I needed to rest every few minutes.

On our return to Sidney I was able to do a little gardening in brief spurts.

On Mothers Day we were surprised when we gathered at the restaurant when our daughter Susan and daughter Laura and her daughter Emma arrived from North Bay, ON – a very special occasion.

In June I flew to Kelowna and then drove to Vernon to visit my brother David in the nursing home. In September we returned to Ontario to visit family and friends, making the circuit: Barrie, North Bay, Ottawa, Kingston, Peterborough, Bowmanville and the Lake house near Fenlon Falls.

I was able to take up golf again when a friend at church offered to share his cart with me. We played nine holes on a weekly basis. I was also able to do most of the gardening and walk the dog. I also returned to the Victoria Male Voice Choir.

In November we attended our grandson's wedding in the Hamilton area. It was just a long weekend, but enjoyable to be a part of this celebration.

2017

While we were in Mexico my brother David died. His memorial service was held in May at Canoe Beach. Elizabeth came with us and we stayed in a cottage at Sycamous. It was an enjoyable weekend, meeting some of David's family for the first time. We encountered a little snow as we came back over the mountains.

In June we went to England we arrived in a hot spell, picked up a car and started out. Just west of Oxford we blew two tires. Fortunately I was able to pull into a lay-by and a truck driver there was able to call for help. We had to return to Heathrow to pick up a new car. Next day we had a good drive to our AirBnB near Ledbury. We visited my sister Margaret every other day for brief visits as she tired very quickly. Our route took us through Malvern and the Malvern Hills, beautiful scenery but tricky driving in places as cars were parked on both sides of the street. We were able to see Ruth, Gillian and Bob and Jane and Colin. Pete was away on holiday.

We attended church in Worcester and were also able to visit Grace's daughter Pam and her husband in Frampton on Severn. We attended my old school's alumni gathering at Kingsood and were able to enjoy the scenery along the Wye Valley, visiting Ross-on-Wye, Monmouth, Tintern Abbey and Chepstow.

The summer saw visits from Joan Tolmie and our grandson Eric and his beautiful wife Sarah. Gardening and golf, dog walking along the Sidney waterfront and relaxing in the garden with a good book and dozing in the sunshine, summer passed all too quickly.

In September I began Bible Study again at the church with an attendance of six or seven. I dropped out of the choir after the first practice. As I was driving home in the rain and dark I came to the decision I did not want to do this drive all winter.

2018

In January we enjoyed a brief visit from Phil and Carol as they were returning home from a holiday in Palm Desert. This year we went to Mexico in February and returned in March. The weather was sunny but cooler. We enjoyed our new unit and with loungers on our smaller balcony we were able to relax and enjoy a restful holiday. I was able to do some preparation for my Bible study group and also give Mary Ann a respite from her normal activities by doing the shopping and cooking. Spring is later this year. It has been wet and stormy since our return but the garden does not seem to mind. It is the best display since moving here.

Whatever the future holds we take it day by day and give thanks.