

Contents

Introduction:.....	2
Murray: Early life - 1917 to 1941.....	3
Murray: Converted to Christianity age 16.....	11
Murray: Leaving home to go out evangelising	15
Murray: War time experiences 1942 to 1945	20
Minnie: Early life - 1922 to 1941.....	33
Minnie: War time experience 1941 to 1945.....	44
Murray: Vision for the Future MAF	54
Murray: Peace is declared on 8 May 1945	57
Minnie: Getting engaged and married to Murray	58
Murray: Starting the Mission Aviation Fellowship	65
Murray: Jack Wyrzten tour around Britain 1946.....	69
Minnie: England after the war 1946 to 1949.....	70
Minnie: The South Island Tour 1950 to 1951.....	80
Murray: Youth for Christ & MAF 1950's.....	84
Minnie: Life in Auckland in the 1950's.....	91
Murray: Family Trip to Europe in 1957.....	98
Minnie: The true story of the 'Buzzy Bee'.....	100
Murray: Zip Industries & Upper Hutt 1960 to 70s.....	101
Minnie: Employment 1960 to 70s.....	106
Minnie: A Trip to England 1975	108
Murray: From Zip to A. J. Park and Son 1982	110
Murray: Retired, but still working for the Lord	111
Murray and Minnie: Friends and Family	112
Murray and Minnie: Maungaraki Baptist Church.....	118

Introduction:

The following pages are an attempt to record on paper some of the lifetime experiences of Murray and Minnie Kendon. Their lives together have been devoted to their family and to God.

They have faithfully followed God's leading to witness to people who may never otherwise have understood God's incredible offer of forgiveness and eternal life through Jesus Christ.

The record has for the most part been written in the 'first person' as transcribed from tape recordings made with Murray and Minnie in July 2010. Other information, details and photos have since been added to these recordings.

We have endeavoured to keep the sequence of events in order but some over-lapping occurs as we move between Murray's recounting of his experiences and those provided by Minnie.

In 2011, Murray aged 94, and Minnie aged 89 celebrated 66 years of marriage together.

Their lives have been an inspiration to many people and it has been a privilege to record these 'recollections.'

Thank you for sharing your story and allowing us to add a few of the memories we have shared through Maungaraki Baptist Church.

Warwick and Chris Dugdale

July 2011 (2nd edition)



Murray: Early life - 1917 to 1941

Owen Murray Kendon: 27 February 1917

I considered it a privilege to grow up in a Christian family.



Grandmother Ellen Blomfield



Grandfather Charles Blomfield

Both sides of my family, the Kendons and the Blomfields were members at the Auckland Baptist Tabernacle for years and years. The Church supported my aunt when she went as a missionary to China and there is now a photograph of her up in the church.

Grandfather Blomfield, the artist, did some beautiful intricate gold leaf work inside the church and it is still there, as they have not painted over it. My brother Roy was also the organist at one time.



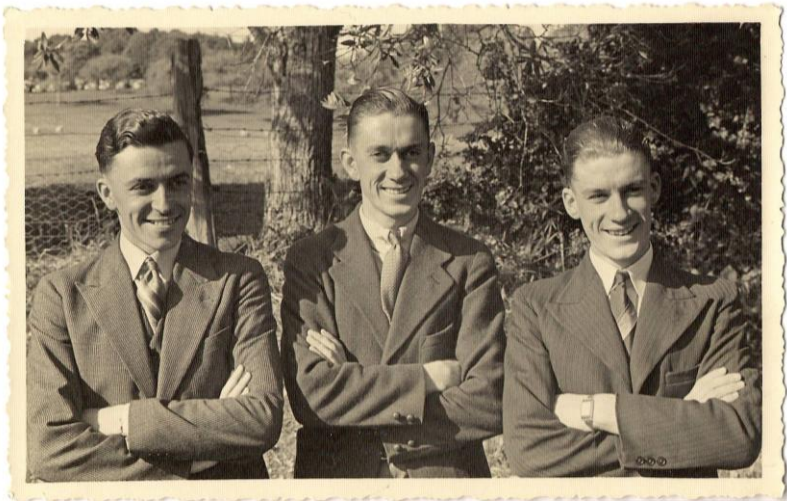
This photo was taken in 1941 when Grandma Kendon was aged 93. She lived to the age of 97 and then met the Lord she loved so much.

On the back row are my Dad and Mum on the left. I am on the back right with my brother Roy standing next to me. Muriel is in front of Roy and my sister Nancy in front of Muriel. To the left of my Grandmother is a cousin.





Dad Phil Murray Roy
Muriel Mum Nancy

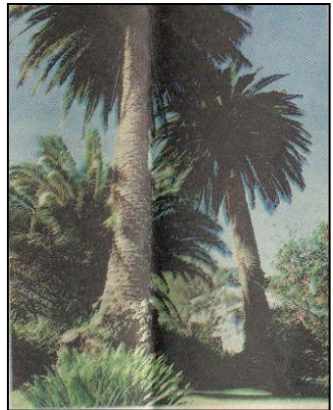
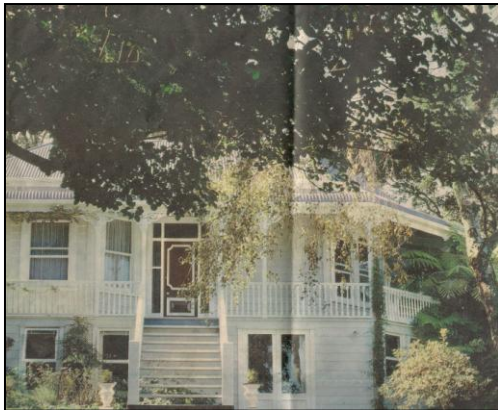


Roy Phil Murray

We lived in a lovely property at 19 Lewin Road in Epson, Auckland. This photo is taken looking up at the house from one of the lawns below.



It had lovely grounds with large trees and a tennis court.



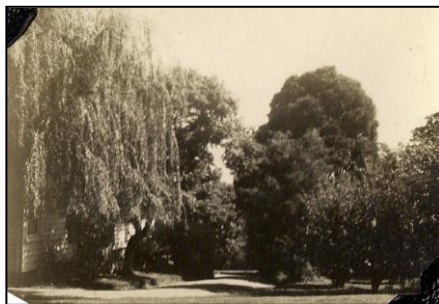
At the rear of the family home was Cornwall Park. The park was beautiful and covered about three square miles of land.

The park was dominated by One Tree Hill, an extinct volcano.



I used to think

“What a back yard to have,
and what a place for undisturbed prayer.”



My mother was in her eighties when one day she wanted to go up to the shops in Onehunga, Auckland. There was no one around with a car that day so she took up an offer to jump on the back of a motor bike in order to get there. No helmet on of course!



My sister Muriel's husband Dick owned this car. One of their sons Ray Williams races a Porsche and is well known as one of the fastest saloon car racers in NZ. Maybe his interest in cars started young. I am not sure if this is Ray in the photo below, as there are five sons!





We had a family picnic around 1933. I am on the left with my sister Muriel sitting next to me. At the front on the right is my father and to his right my sister Nancy.



The family also owned a Bach at Torbay where we went for holidays.

I attended Auckland Grammar School until at the age of fourteen. I left halfway through the fourth form. I was in the same class as my brother Phil at the time.



I started to work for a company called Radio Limited. At the end of the first year I was given an extra week of pay and told that I was no longer to be employed there. I think the company took on new people each year to keep the labour cost down.

I had to look for another job. My father was a friend of Mr Porter of 'Mason and Porter' and I was given a job with that firm. I worked there for two years making lawn mowers.

I enjoyed study and at the age of sixteen decided to try for the University Entrance examination. I studied for the first two terms on my own and then with a tutor for the third term. I had to study one foreign language and chose Latin and I passed the exams.

Murray: Converted to Christianity age 16

I was converted in 1933 at the age of 16 under the fiery preaching of William Patteson Nicholson (better known as just W.P.).

W.P. was born in 1876 in Bangor, Ireland. He was at times referred to as the 'tornado' of the pulpit. He was in Auckland in 1933.



William Patteson Nicholson and his wife Fanny Elizabeth Nicholson.

After I was converted, many things changed, as from then on I was working to bring others to the Lord.

Billy Nicholson taught us 'new-born Christians' to witness and to start reading the Bible from day one, reading fast, and going right through the Bible several times before attempting to study it. Great advice!

Following our conversion, some of us, using singing and simple testimonies, started witnessing on the streets and beaches, and in hospitals, parks and homes as well as at churches and mission halls.

We also started prayer and fellowship meetings, which soon grew too large to be held in a home. These meetings grew to become a 'down-town mission'. Meetings were held in a basement billiard saloon that had previously been closed down as it had become a place of violence frequented by young 'drop-outs' and old 'drunks'.



They were wonderful days with many coming to faith in Christ and being delivered from their old ways.

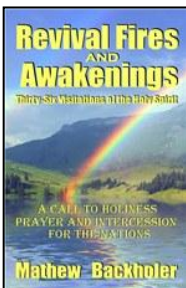
In the photo above, Andy Watson who was converted the same night as I was is on the left. Matt Finlay is standing in the middle and was another of my good friends, converted earlier than us. I am on the right.



This photo above was taken during one of the Ngaruwahia Conventions in 1936.

I am in the middle at the back. On the right of the back row is Matt Finlay and in front of him is John Finlay. These were two of my best friends and we always went around together.

John had an amazing memory for remembering conversations. He could later repeat almost everything that was said.



The 1936 Ngaruwahia Convention is written about in the book called ‘Revival Fires and Awakenings’

Dr. James Orr is on the right in the photo below and he spoke at the Ngaruawahia Convention in 1936.



Dr. Orr recalled that he wrote the words for the hymn ‘Cleanse Me’, during an intense movement of the Holy Spirit at the 1936 Easter revival convention in Ngaruawahia, New Zealand. He wrote that,

“For some time prior to this Easter campaign, an attitude of unusual expectancy had been prevalent among these people. Prayer meetings spread throughout the city with much fervency, and intercession led to widespread confession and reconciliation among the believers. Great numbers of unconverted students professed faith in Christ. The nights were given over to exultant testimony, with singing such as one expects in heaven.”

Murray: Leaving home to go out evangelising

Evangelising in the King Country

An increasing urge was growing in my heart to leave the city work. I wanted to find a way to get the message of the reality of true life in Jesus Christ to those living far away from a city or town, especially to the young people.

Another of the new Christians told me he was feeling the same about going out on a mission. We prayed together over the next nine months seeking God's guidance and confirmation. We left our work and homes in early 1937, at the age of twenty-one, to sing and preach in small townships and scattered settlements.

We started during the winter in the 'King Country', an area dotted with timber mills and bush camps. We were often able to ride on one of the primitive log trains up the rickety rails travelling the twenty miles out to the 'bush whacking' areas.

We made friends by working without pay alongside the Bushmen, taking a hand at crosscutting felled logs and enjoying with them an enormous evening meal in the camp cookhouse. Afterwards we would sing and speak to the men about the Gospel before walking back on the rails through the dark of the night to sleep in our old car.

It was very uncomfortable. The upright section of the front seats could not be folded down and we had to sleep facing the front of the car with our feet hanging over it.

We would often wake in the morning to find icicles hanging inside the car.

We visited Taumaranui, Raetahi and spent a bit of time around Ohakune, an interesting town not very far from Mount Ruapehu.

On one farm where we were invited to have a meal and to sleep, there was a coalmine. Every day they would send a truck with railway wheels out on the rickety old lines to get a load of coal.

Paeroa area, the work changes

By late 1937 it was time to leave the timber felling area and move into mining and farming areas to the east of Auckland. Here the work was very different.

We first spent some time in Auckland building a tiny trailer-caravan which we finished early in 1938. It had a gas cylinder and a gas heater which we used to cook on and warm ourselves.



We towed the trailer-caravan behind my old 1917 Talbot car, which we slept in. We paid thirty-five pounds for the car.

Being closer to Auckland City we sought the help of a team during the weekends and so with a small band of enthusiastic young Christian men and women and the old banjo, we 'wowed' the beaches, parks and streets with songs, testimonies and preaching.

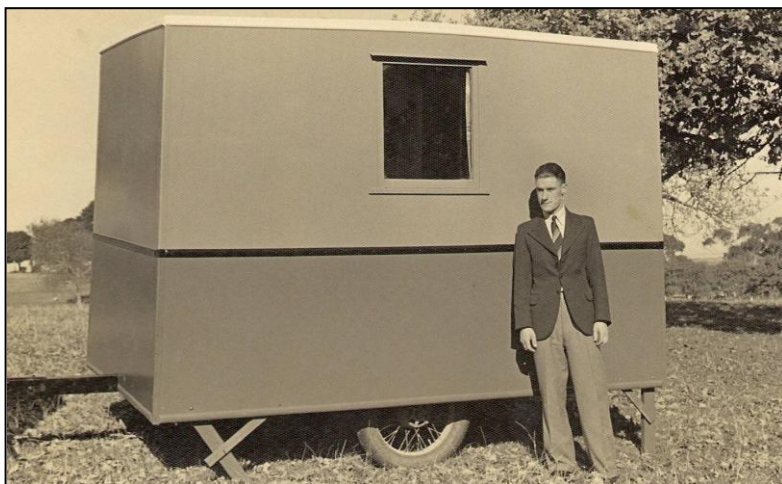


Tauranga 1938 Murray is on the left.

The Lord must have then given me the idea to go around visiting the farmhouses in an area.

When one of the families seemed interested in what we were doing we asked if they would like us to have a series of meetings in their house starting on the following Monday night. Once this was agreed to we then arranged to do the same on Tuesday nights at a farm house in another area and we soon filled up our weeks.

We spent the weekends witnessing at every welcoming church, youth group, or street meeting. We were based at Paeroa for a while and on Friday late shopping nights we had open-air meetings and often had over a hundred people there. The local youth would be walking up and down the streets for something to do and we sometimes joined in with the Salvation Army work.



Murray by the Caravan

I remember meeting the Bowen family who owned an ironmongers shop in Paeroa. We went in there to ask about a kerosene cooker. After we were shown the cooker we decided to buy it but the owner would not take any money.

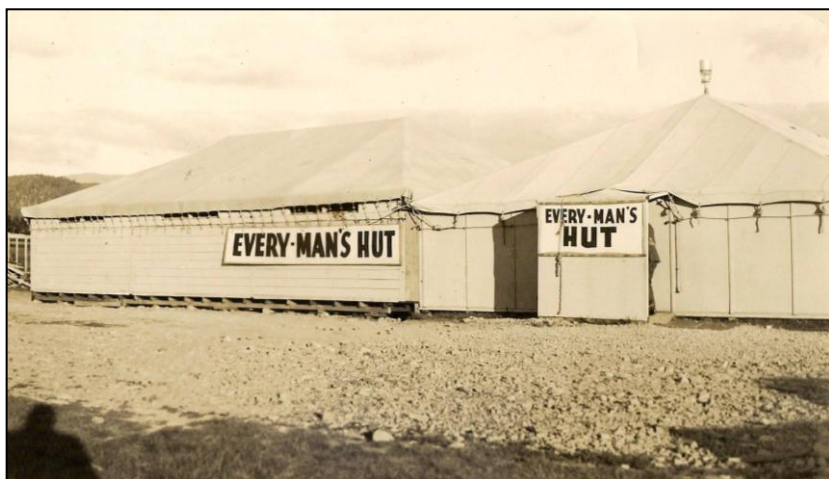
I have never forgotten the story about the boy who had worked in that shop. He had taken off with money and the owner had chased after him with a pick handle and hit him with it to mark him in case he denied all knowledge of the theft.

We made friends with the Hill family who had a farm in Tirohia, a few miles out of Paeroa. We met up with John Hill again at the recent sixtieth reunion of MAF.

We continued making similar arrangements, holding evangelistic meetings through the area and down the coast, until during the early war years when we were no longer allowed to buy petrol for such work. The Second World War started in September 1939.

I was called up for the armed forces in 1942. I did not voluntarily enlist as I was working on home missions and was making plans for an interdenominational mission.

At the same time I was working in 'Every Mans Hut' (similar to YMCA). This was sponsored by the Brethren church and was in the Hopu Hopu Military Camp near Ngaruawahia.



Murray: War time experiences 1942 to 1945

After my call up I was interviewed and given a choice of which of the armed services I would prefer. During the discussion the panel was very interested in the Christian work I had been doing. They gave a lot of consideration to what I would like to do as they were aware I had been working in the YMCA along with a friend while waiting to be called up. When the authorities asked me if I was a conscientious objector, my answer was 'No.'

The Royal New Zealand Air Force

I decided on the Air Force as I was not keen on joining the Navy or the Army. The initial camp in Rotorua was for the basic training. The trainees stayed in hotels. In the course of the training I learnt how to dismantle and reassemble weapons. We learnt to fire the weapons at moving targets and I proved to be a reasonable marksman. I remember training and firing the Tommy gun while running. I enjoyed the training course and my time in Rotorua. It was good fun.

God's leading for me to train as a pilot

In the early years of the war I had read about how the pilots in the Air Force had to shoot down enemy aircraft. I decided at that stage that I would prefer to be a navigator, as I was not keen to be shooting others down. However, when it came to the decision, I wanted to know what the Lord wanted me to do. I then received scriptures from the Lord such as:

'Blessed be the Lord, my rock, who teaches my hands to war, and my fingers to fight.' Psalm 144:1

I finally received my posting, and the papers read "Owing to present and future needs you have been re-classified for training as a pilot." Everyone in the call up had seemed to want to become a pilot and it was difficult for the Air Force to get men to choose to be navigators. So although I had chosen to be trained as a navigator I was assigned to pilot training. I took that as being an answer from the Lord.

Pilot Training in N.Z. and Canada.



A small contingent of us from the initial training course at Rotorua were posted to Harewood, near Christchurch

I learnt to fly the old faithful Tiger Moth and first flew solo at Harewood.

It was a very interesting time.

An opportunity then arose for me to go overseas. The Air Force asked for volunteers to go to Canada for further training and one or two of the new pilots volunteered and we were sent off to Canada.

We went by ship to Oakland, California, just across the bridge from San Francisco and then travelled by a slow train for about three days and nights up the coast to Vancouver.

The men went to a base for further flight training and from there I was selected to do a navigator's course on Prince Edward Island. Pilots needed to train in navigation as well as flying.



A new Royal Canadian Air Force Training Flying Station had just been constructed at Dunville, Ontario and it was here that we arrived as 'Sprogs' (new recruits). The above photo was taken just after we arrived at the Hamilton Station in 1942.

I spent about eight months in Canada, two of which were at the Navigation School, before being transferred to Britain.

I was pleased to have been selected as a pilot and really enjoyed the training. The aircraft I learnt to fly were Harvards and Yales and because the Commanding Officer had suggested I join the Coastal Command, I learnt to pilot the Avro Anson, a twin-engine plane.



Avro Anson

While in Canada I had accumulated some leave and was not backward in being involved in more evangelising. When I was at a church meeting in Montreal a lady in the congregation who had heard I was going on to New York said to me,.

“When you get to New York, find Jack Wyrzten. I don’t know his address or anything, I cannot tell you any more than that, but you won’t be sorry when you find him.”

I arrived in New York and it took me three days to find Jack Wyrzten.

When I did, there followed a whirl of wonderful Christian meetings in which I took a small part with my banjo. Led by Jack Wyrzten of the 'Word of Life Ministries' the group included his co-founder Harry Bollback as the pianist. Harry could play anything and was a great guy.



Jack Wyrzten



Bev Shea

The group also included Bev Shea (George Beverly Shea, later to become famous in the Billy Graham Crusades) a deep resonant baritone singer. I was on leave from Air Force training and went around New York with these fellows evangelising and "had a ball".

We went here, there and everywhere for meetings and would drive back at night, often arriving at four in the morning and then Jack would be in his office at 8.00 am next morning, ready to go again.

Air Force training in Scotland and England

With my leave over I left for Britain by sea with the other RNZAF pilots, disembarked in Greenock Scotland and travelled overnight from Scotland down to the New Zealand Centre at Brighton.

One of my lasting memories of that train trip was seeing, as the next day dawned, hundreds and hundreds of chimney pots on the houses alongside the railway.



My final flying training in Britain was in Oxfords at Dalcross near Inverness, Scotland and in Wellington Bombers at Silloth in Cumberland on the Solway Firth.



Oxford

Flying Experiences: Then and Now

It was a good life in the Air Force and we made many good friends. Being Officers and aircrew we had a pretty cushy time while our Wellington bombers (below) were being serviced between flights.



Murray at the controls of a Wellington bomber.

During our training we practiced flying three aircraft in formation, wing tip to wing tip. It was quite exciting as we had to fly so close and rely on our own and the other pilot's skill and judgement.



The Harvard (shown below) was a tricky plane to land perfectly compared to landing a Tiger Moth, which was a 'piece of cake.' I mostly enjoyed flying the Harvard or the similar aircraft, the Yale.



The Tiger Moth (shown below) could be put into a side-slip. Quite often, if you wanted to save time getting to a lower altitude, you could side-slip down and turn into the wind to land.



It was a marvellous feeling, the freedom to be up in the air and flying. There was always a big temptation to fly through a cloud but if two pilots had the same idea it could be 'non habit forming'.

The Tiger Moth cruised at 75 knots, but it could fly faster. We could chase the ducks which we found can fly up to 75 knots flapping their wings as fast as a sparrow.

We had one instructor in Dalcross, Inverness, who was a perfectionist. It was most unusual if he did not make a perfect three-point landing every time he landed an aircraft. He was a very keen Christian and was meticulous in everything he did. It was a real challenge for us when flying with him. I could never reach his standard.

I once 'landed' a Tiger Moth twelve feet up in the air and that shook the aeroplane up a bit. You normally come down to land with the motor going but flying very slowly and then when you get down to the right height (about six feet above the ground) you just cut the throttle and the plane settles down. From twelve feet above it was quite a bump when the wheels hit the ground. That aircraft needed a bit of tightening up here and there after that landing. Those old aircraft are great and it did not take much to get it back into the air again.

I was very fortunate in recent years to enjoy a flight my grandchildren arranged for me as a birthday present. It was in a Tiger Moth from Paraparaumu airport. I had a bit of time on the controls and 'looped the loop' and did 'side slipping' for the grandchildren who were watching from the ground.



Lost above the clouds in Scotland

I got lost once when training from Dalcross near Inverness in Scotland. I was on my own in the aircraft and had been given the order to practise exercises above the clouds. I went up through a hole in the clouds and knew I had to keep an eye on that hole so I could get back down again. It was in a mountainous area. So I climbed and practiced exercises and when it came time flew down through the hole in the clouds and then realised the hole was not over the area where I expected to be. I knew it would be dangerous to find a landing in the mountains so I flew out towards the sea.

When I got in the clear, all I could do was stay over the sea and try to find my way back in to where it would be safe to go down and land. I had to make up my mind whether to go north or south and I chose to go north. I flew up the coast around the north of Scotland and came back south again. The first airfield I could see turned out to be Wick. I landed at this airfield and went into the Operations room and asked the guys in there, "Where am I?"

There was a big map of the area covering the wall and the fellows in the Operations room laughed at me for being lost, cut a square metre out of their map on the wall and gave it to me as a keepsake. From Wick I telephoned my commanding Officer who was delighted to hear I was safe as he thought he had lost both a pilot and an aircraft. The aircraft was re-fuelled at Wick and I set off to return to Dalcross, feeling very fortunate that the Lord had led me to find Wick and safety.



My next training base was at Silloth in Cumberland. There was an area of sea near Silloth which the pilots referred to as 'Hudson' Bay. Many Hudson aircraft had gone down into the sea while training.

I was a Pilot
Officer.

Later I was a Flight
Lieutenant



Preaching in Ireland and England when on leave

I had some leave due while at Silloth and was able to travel to Ireland, where I met some keen young men of the Castlereagh Road Mission. They challenged me "If you will preach for a few nights, we will fill the hall"! I agreed to preach, they did fill the hall and the cinema on the Sunday, and it was a wonderful time of blessing and salvation.

On my return from Ireland some Silloth friends asked about my leave and I told them about those meetings. They said “We’ll make our church available if you do the same here.” So we had some open-air meetings at Silloth (Cumberland).

The photo below shows Jock Troup playing the banjo-ukulele at one of these meetings.



Meeting Minnie

It was at one of these meetings that a group of Women's Auxiliary Air Force (WAAF) cooks came and sat in the front row. One of the WAAFs was especially keen and attended every follow up Bible study and prayer meeting we had. She was a bit shy but full of fun with a Geordie wit and we quickly became friends. Her name was Minnie McCartney and she was from Newcastle on Tyne. I will let Minnie tell her story.



Minnie: Early life - 1922 to 1941

Minnie Beaumont McCartney 16 March 1922

My early life was spent in Newcastle on Tyne, England. I left school at 14. We had to in those days because we had to sit exams to go further with our education.



Minnie's parents were Joseph and Edith McCartney
(Edith is holding Minnie's brother John)

My parents had a really hard time. My father was in the First World War (1914 – 1918) and came back to his young married wife and young son. He went back to his job and had to work hard. Neither parent had the opportunity for education. My mother had left school when she was about 12.

My Dad was very bright and read a lot. He read everything he could but was just not formally educated. His father was a bit of a tyrant and his mother died when he was very young. All of his life Dad worked hard to keep his family of six children together. My parents didn't try pushing us or having us trained in anything.

The Newcastle Coast is beautiful and my brothers and sisters would go to the beach by train from the station just above our street. There were no cars in our family.



We had cousins about our own age in Newcastle and we played together and went to school together. I have only one cousin remaining in Newcastle and we still ring each other occasionally. I have a nephew and a niece in Newcastle but we don't keep in contact much.

The story of the ambulance ride

I must tell you a story about the ambulance. My maternal Grandmother owned a house down at the coast for us to have a holiday in. I remember she wanted the windows cleaned and some tidying up done at this house while it was empty. She asked my brother and me to go down and do the cleaning and she said, "I am getting the ambulance to come and take you down".

She donated to the St John ambulance and because of this thought that she had the right to use the ambulance.



Sure enough the ambulance came. Irvine and I got in and the driver told us we had to crouch and keep our heads down in the ambulance the way to Cullercoats. I don't remember how we got back. I was only about 10 and my brother about 12. I don't remember that we got much cleaning done!

My Grandmother was a hard case. She did not do any work herself but got others to do it for her. She had arthritis and used a walking stick. When she went to use the bus she waved her walking stick in the air to stop the bus. She was a real character. My grandfather never went anywhere with her. He used to ask me, "Where's your Grandmother?" He never knew where she was.

My Grandmother was quite an entrepreneur and had a number of properties around Newcastle. My aunt who did not marry ran the new shop she bought. It was a grocery and general store, and had two flats with it, one upstairs and the other attached.

She was a bit of a 'stay at home' and mainly kept to herself. She and my Dad (her son-in-law) did not get along because he voted Labour and she was Conservative.

I think she was a little bitter as she had lost her only son in the 1914-18 war and my Dad came out of it unscathed. Dad fought in France and he lost his brother in the war too.

Grandmother died during the war. She would have loved New Zealand if she had the chance to come out here.

She bought a house out in the country at Bishop Auckland, about ten miles from Newcastle, because she did not want to be where the bombs were falling. She was living there when she had a stroke and died.

Working in Newcastle and starting a factory fire

The day I turned fourteen I left school and the next day my mother said I had to go and get my own job. With another girl I went out to look for work. I took the first job I was offered.

It was with a company called J. Dampney and Sons, which was later, renamed 'British Paints'.

I worked there for nearly six years.



There were two factory buildings, one each side of the road. We worked on Saturday mornings in those days and on one of those Saturdays just before it was time to leave I spilled a tin of paint. I tried to clean it up with 'turps' but didn't manage it all and so some paint and 'turps' were left on the floor over the weekend

During the afternoon, the sun streamed in through the windows and the heat set the paint and 'turps' alight. This caused the fire which burnt the factory to the ground. We had been planning to go on strike that weekend! The good thing was that there was a beautiful new factory built to replace the one burnt down.

I never told anyone, not even my family. Years later I met the man who owned British Paints as it was later called and he took us out to a fair. I wondered if I should tell him the cause of the fire, but I never did.

Singing for the troops

A foreman or manager where I worked had got a group of singers and players together and he asked me if I would join the group and sing. I started to sing for some of the troops that were stationed a few miles out of Newcastle up in Hexham, a country area. I used to sing solo at the concerts and I can remember singing,

Oh Johnny, Oh Johnny, How you can love.
Oh, Johnny! Oh, Johnny! Heavens above.
You make my sad heart jump with joy
And when you're near I just can't sit still a minute
I'm so, Oh, Johnny! Oh, Johnny!
Please tell me dear
What makes me love you so?
You're not handsome, it's true
But when I look at you
I just, Oh, Johnny!
Oh, Johnny! Oh!

We also sang other secular songs that would appeal to the troops. The troops would have supper with us afterwards and then we would return to Newcastle. When we came home from a concert I would get back into Newcastle alright but then I was left to get home on my own. There were no streetlights, it was pitch dark, and the last bus left at ten o'clock.

My mother did not like the idea of me travelling on my own, although we felt fairly safe in England in those days. But it was quite a long way from the city to home, about two miles, and you could not walk it easily. So I did not keep up the singing.

Going to a dance when I was 16

My girlfriend and I went with two boys to a dance being held on the other side of the river Tyne. They rowed us across in a little boat. When I think back, anything could have happened. It was not a very safe thing to do.

At the end of the dance we came back to the boat to find that the tide had gone out and we could not move it back into the water. The 'ratbags' left us to get home by ourselves. We had to catch two buses to get home. I never told anyone.

Air Raids over Newcastle on Tyne

We had air raids when I was living in Newcastle. It was a targeted city as there was engineering and ship building on the river and the Germans were looking to destroy the shipyards. We lived right on the river Tyne.

There was the river, a railway line and then our house. The bombers used to come on a moonlight night and could follow the river as the moon was shining on the water. The shipyard where my Dad and my brother worked was only a quarter of a mile from where we lived. There was another shipyard about two miles further up the river on the other side.



The defence forces tried to screen the river with smoke. They had a great big truck which they would bring and park outside our house on a clear night. The soldiers would light up the diesel furnace on the truck, hoping the thick black smoke coming out the funnel would drift over the river. We seemed to get the black smuts all over our place and not over the river.

One night the bombers found their way up the river and the bombs landed on the village where we had previously lived at St Peter's. My Dad's father and brother still lived there. My Dad's mother had died some time before the war. A land mine dropped right in the doorway of what had been my other Grandmother's shop. She had by that time left it and bought a new shop on the main road, away from that part of the village. The village was two hundred yards from the shipyard and the bombers missed the whole of the shipyard but the village was almost flattened.



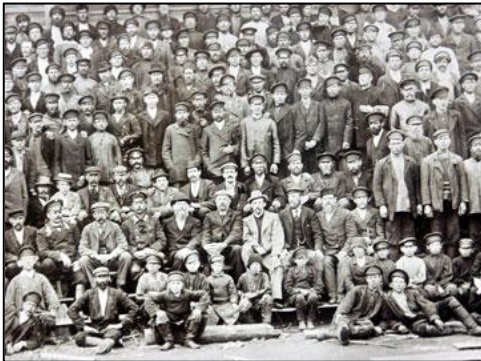
The land mine finished the old village off! That was a good thing, but quite a few people lost their lives. My Dad could see that it was probably our old village, where the bombs had been dropped. He set off to see what had happened to his Dad. He went through the rubble but later found out my Grandfather and Uncle had gone out and were safe as they had not been at home during the air raid.

The shipyard was still operating but the damaged part of the village was left in a mess for years and years, just rubble. It became a dump, a terrible rat infested place, but after the war someone made the area into beautiful marina with yachts and posh houses. When I went back to Newcastle I could not figure out where our house had been.



When we had lived at St Peters village it was sort of divided into two and we lived in the side away from the river. The Council had bought some land and built new houses at St Anthony and the people living in the bottom part of the old village were to be shifted there. That's when our family moved. My Grandfather's household was one of the families to be shifted but he suggested we could have the house he had been allocated at St Anthony. The authorities agreed and it was arranged he could move into our house in the top half of St Peter village and we could move to St Anthony.

The north of England was considered the poor part of Britain and people from there were treated like the poor cousins. Newcastle is now a very up-market city. They have made the river so lovely and no big ships go up there now. The Council built the Millennium Bridge called 'The Eye' and the City has been cleaned up as there are no more coal mines in the area. Early on the men worked in the coalmines or the shipyards. One of my brothers worked in the Engineering Works, the other one in the shipyards with my Dad and my third brother was a French polisher.



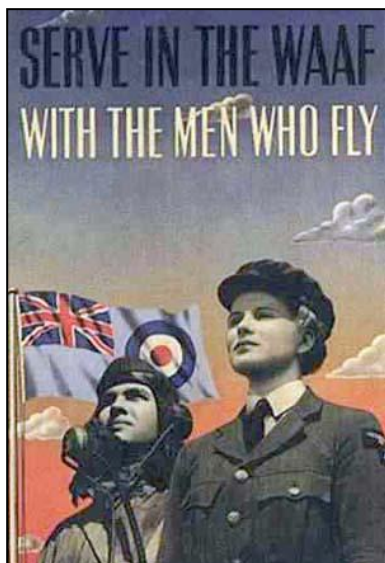
Shipyard photos



Minnie: War time experience 1941 to 1945

Joining the WAAFs: Women's Auxiliary Air Force

I was 19 and at work in the paint factory when suddenly I thought I would just go and join up with the Forces.



They didn't call up women at that stage, we just volunteered. I thought I would go over in my lunch hour and join up. Why I did it... I don't know, because I had never been away from home and did not mix with other people. I was ever so shy as neither my parents nor I had socialised very much. I didn't think about all that and just went to the 'call up centre' where they asked me what service I wanted to be in.

I said the Air Force because I didn't like the Army uniform and I certainly wasn't going to join the Navy. So I signed the papers for the WAAF's and went back to work.

When I went home that night and told my parents I had joined up, they did not believe me because I had threatened to join up so many times before when things didn't please me at home. They finally believed me when the papers arrived for me to go for a medical and then my mother got quite upset with me. She didn't want me to go. However, I had the medical and I was passed as fit.

The paint company did not want me to leave and said they could get me an exemption, but I had joined up and did not want to be exempted.

I had to do some intelligence tests and one of the questions the recruiting person asked me I thought was a bit stupid for an intelligence test. She didn't know I was going to join as a cook and she asked "How do you cook cabbage?" I thought for a moment as I had never cooked in my life before, but I answered, "Put it in cold water". "No you don't", she said, "You always put it in boiling water." (If she had asked me now I would have said you don't put it in any water) She did not know much either. Then I said, "You must always wash it first." She answered, "you will do." So that was it. I was in.

I had to continue working and wait until they sent me my tickets and papers. I was told which day I had to go the station and get a train that would be waiting there for all of us WAAs.

The station was full of people. My mother was still upset and would not come with me to the station. I was sorry about that. She just stood at the door and waved to me. But then as I got on the train to get my seat my mother came running along the platform with a bag of cakes. She was sorry that she had not come to see me off, so we sorted that one out.

Training in the WAAF's

I cannot remember the name of the station we went to, to be kitted out with our uniform, but it was away down in the south of England, maybe in Middlesex.

Then we were moved to Morecombe for marching and saluting training and all that sort of thing. We were on the sea front and this Airman was training us and yelling at us. We were quaking in our shoes, but we got through all of that.

Then I was asked what I would like to do in the WAAF's. I said that I didn't know as I hadn't thought about it. I thought they would just tell us what we were going to do.

The first thing I could think about was the barrage balloons that were all over the cities and I thought I could go into that. The Officer sort of got a smirk on her face. I think she could just see me hanging on to the end of



rope with the balloon taking off with me, as I was so small. She said she didn't think that would be suitable. I hadn't had any training in anything and the Officer said they were desperately short of cooks. I replied I hadn't cooked a thing in my life as my mother did that at home and she said, "We will train you."

So I went as a cook. We did quite extensive training. We had to learn how to cut up a cow carcass and what the parts were called and what to use them for. We had to bone bacon and slice it. It was all good basic training. We went to two different Air Force bases to do the training in chefs' schools. They did not train us to cook fancy cream cakes as that was out, as far as the war was concerned.

Our cooking had to fit in with the rationing but we also had to have training such as cooking in a pit like a Maori hangi, (though they did not call it that). We had to go out and dig a hole and get the stones hot and learn how to cook the food in the hole. This was in case the kitchen was bombed. We would have to know what to do to prepare a meal if there was nothing left of the kitchen.

It was a pretty good training and after six months we were fully qualified cooks ready to feed the airmen. I was finally posted to Silloth as a trained cook. (WAAF hat badge on right)



At Silloth I was sent to the Sergeants' Mess. We had to be capable of cooking for 2000 men in the Airmen's mess or 200-300 in the Sergeant's Mess. Later I went into the Officers' Mess where the cooking was a bit different from that provided for the other ranks. We had six cooks on each shift, 6.00am to 2.00pm, and 2.00pm to 10.00pm. One week we would be on cook's dishes, another week on vegetables and so on, so that we would not get offended if we were left on one area that we did not want to be on.

On the night shift we had to make 500-600 bread rolls each night because the men would eat more than one. The Airmen who had been out flying would come into the kitchen in the middle of the night and help themselves as we were making the rolls.

They were a nice crowd of girls to work with and of course the waitresses were separate from us, but they came into the kitchen to get the food and we got to know them. I more or less kept to myself but if I found a nice person for a friend, quiet like me, then we would stick together. I didn't want to be in the crowd that wanted to go drinking because I hadn't been used to it.

Meeting Murray

I had been at Silloth for about 14 months when I first met Murray.

Murray was having a weeklong Christian witnessing campaign as part of a series of rallies and meetings in Scotland. None of us WAAFs went to church as we did not have church parades like most of the people on the base did. A group of four or five of us were doing vegetables in the preparation room when a WAAF, quite a bit older than the rest of us, came in and looked at us a bit sheepishly.

Then she asked, "Would you like to go to a meeting tonight at the church down in the village?" This was a Wednesday and it wasn't our thing to go to church especially on a week night.

We did not say anything but just looked at her. She said, "The speaker is a pilot and he comes from New Zealand". That must have interested us as we said, "OK, we will go", and we all went.

There were six of us and we all sat in one row. I think when Murray came out to start his meeting he must have thought, "Hello, six WAAFs all sitting in a row", as he hadn't had any WAAFs at his meetings up to that stage.

I was a bit taken with this man because I thought he was so sincere, that's what struck me about him. My friend and I decided to go back to the meeting the next night and that is how it happened that I met him.

I was converted to Christianity and Murray and I were not separated from then on. Amazing isn't it. It was like a miracle to me, I didn't know what was going to happen that night at the meeting as I had no Christian background.

Posting to No. 179 Squadron

It was very soon after this that Murray got notice that he was posted to 179 Squadron in Cornwall and as he walked towards the camp to relay the news to me, he met me as I was going to tell him the news that I was being posted to 179 Squadron!

We WAAFs were to go by train to our new base, which was in Cornwall, almost as far down as Lands End. Murray was going on leave in Scotland at about that time and he said, "I have changed my mind and instead of going to Scotland I will come with you as far as London". I said it was OK and so to London we went.

He bought me a Bible in London and saw me onto the train to Cornwall. Then Murray went on leave and later arrived at Predannack in Cornwall. We soon arranged to meet in the local village of Mullion. Murray was a Flight Lieutenant and I was a Leading Aircraft Woman.

We were on two different stations in Cornwall, Chivenor and Predannack. Mullion was a holiday place and the Air Force had taken over all the hotels. I was put in the Officers' Mess and was cooking at a different hotel to where Murray and some others of my squadron were billeted.

I went to the WAAF Officer and said I would like to go to such and such a hotel. It was quite a cheek in some ways, but she got me transferred to the other hotel. Of course, the WAAF Officer at that time, did not know anything about Murray and me. That was good, because we could meet after my shifts. Murray did not fly during the day so we could spend quite a bit of time together."

Transferred to Benbecula, Outer Hebridean Islands

For a very short period the squadron was transferred from Cornwall to Benbecula in the Outer Hebridean islands. The islands included Northern and Southern Uist with Benbecula in between. They were all joined by causeways. It was quite remote. They could not grow trees or anything else except heather.



We were at Benbecula for six weeks. That was enough. It was too isolated. The wind blew constantly at 60 mph.

We took our bicycles with us in the aircraft and when we went riding on our bikes at Benbecula we sometimes did not have to pedal, we just sat there and the wind blew us along. We were so cut off from anywhere that we did not have to wear our uniform and wore civilian clothes. There were no WAAF Officers on the base and discipline was casual.

The base was manned because people had questioned, "Why had the government spent millions building the air field?" It was originally built in 1942 when planes could fly only limited distances and the only way to get them patrolling that far north was to build the airfield.

However, as planes became capable of flying longer distances and could then patrol further north, the government would not admit they no longer needed the base.

There was one church, one hotel, and one post office. Murray and I went to church one Sunday morning and could not understand a word as it was all in Gaelic.

The minister invited us to his home for lunch. His poor wife looked so worn out. She had not expected visitors and I felt really sorry for her. It was so isolated and she had to pump the water for the house.

On the way north from Cornwall the WAAFs surprisingly had been allowed to fly up with the squadron.



On the way back we had to take a boat to Oban, a train to Glasgow, then another train to London and finally a train to Cornwall. It was a long and tiring trip, lugging a kit bag home to Mullion.

Murray: Visiting churches and other groups in South Cornwall

Between my Coastal Command flights and Minnie's cooking duties we biked and later drove all over South Cornwall. We visited many churches and other groups to sing and tell of God's love and saving power.

We made very good friends with the Thomas family in Cornwall, they were a very hospitable family and we used to go out with them in a small dingy.



Flying a Wellington bomber as a pilot on anti U-boat night patrols

179 Squadron was based at Predannack RAF base in South Cornwall and we flew every third night and were in the air from darkness until dawn. At that time there were two hours of daylight saving and in summer it did not get dark until late. The air crews spent the day before flying duty sleeping and then next morning after flying eight to twelve hours in the night they would sleep again. I was pilot of a Wellington bomber flying on anti U-boat patrols.

The Wellingtons were armed with depth charges and machine guns. They had a powerful radar and a 22 million candlepower searchlight (Leigh Light) slung underneath the aircraft. Our brief was to find and destroy the enemy submarines that were combing the Atlantic to sink allied ships carrying troops, fuel or supplies to Britain. We would fly low over the ocean showing no lights and maintaining radio silence except when there was a 'kill' or 'sighting'. We tried to surprise and catch U-boats as they surfaced to charge their batteries. My crew of six comprised Brits, Aussies and Kiwis. There were two pilots so we could have spells flying the aircraft.

That crew did not sink any submarines but one night while flying over the Atlantic I sighted a U-boat on the surface charging batteries, right underneath our aircraft, but moving at right angles to our flight path. Had we seen it earlier we could have turned our searchlight on it and done something about destroying it. It was not good to drop depth charges too far from a target as they would be just wasted. Jolly shame that, as we could have sunk that one! The U-boat crew did have a go at our plane with their machine gun firing explosive shells, but did not hit us.



Murray: Vision for the Future MAF

One night, while flying over the Bay of Biscay, on U-boat patrol, I could see in the distance the flak coming from the anti aircraft guns as the searchlights were scanning the sky over France, looking for a British ‘thousand bomber raid’. I thought,



“How is it that there is enough money to get thousands of planes into the air to kill and destroy, when only a handful are being used for missionary work?”

I remembered hearing in a New Zealand missionary meeting years before about a team that had set out to find a tribe, said to be living somewhere deep in the jungle. The missionaries returned weeks later out of food and worn out by the incredible hardship, having almost been killed by a flash flood that destroyed their canoe.

I thought,

“A small aeroplane could have found that tribe and mapped a route all in a day or two, and later guided the team, dropping supplies to them.”

Thus was born the seed for the ‘Mission Aviation Fellowship.’



Minnie:

When I went into the Air Force I did not know when the end of the war was going to come. It was not like an ordinary job where if I did not like it I could leave. We were treated like teenagers in the WAAFs and had to be on the base by ten o'clock and could be put on a charge if we were not back in time.



Murray and I used to get around that and rarely got in to camp before ten o'clock, as it was still daylight at that time in the summer. Once we 'frogmarched' in past the guardhouse, close together with me in front, and we made it in without being caught. Murray, being an Officer, did not have the same restrictions as I did.

Motor-bike accident

Murray had bought a motorbike to get around Cornwall. I was on the pillion one night when we had an accident on our way to take a service at the church in Newquay. It was raining at the time and an American soldier drove out of a side road in a Jeep. He saw us a bit late, braked and then stopped his Jeep right in our path.

Had he driven straight through we would have missed him but he stalled the Jeep and we hit him on the side. Both of us had to get medical attention. The motor bike was a write-off. The American took us back to base where I was put in the sick bay as my leg was injured when it hit the kick-starter pedal of our motor bike.

When I was in the hospital, I thought to myself “Oh my!” They will find out about our relationship and I will be posted away.” The WAAFs were not allowed to have any liaison with an Officer. We had tried successfully to hide our friendship for a long time.

When the WAAF Officer came to visit me in hospital she said “You know you are not supposed to ride on the back of a motor bike don’t you?” I said, “No, I know we are not allowed to ride on the back of a motor bike while ‘on camp’ but I didn’t know I wasn’t allowed to do so ‘off camp’.” The Officer said, “You know now don’t you!”

Nothing is secret

A funny thing happened later. When I was de-mobbed and I got my release, (Murray already had his release and was up in London) I had all my papers ready and was to hand in my uniform. The same Officer was there as I was signing my de-mob papers and she looked at them and said, “That wasn’t your name.” I said “No Ma’am,” and she asked “Did you marry him?” and when I said “Yes” the Officer said “Well, congratulations.” She must have known all the time that I was going out with Murray but she did not do anything about it.

Murray: Peace is declared on 8 May 1945

When peace was declared on 8 May 1945, Minnie and I were still based in Cornwall.



I was on leave in London and near the Statue of Eros at Piccadilly when the 'All Clear' sirens sounded, announcing the end of the War in Europe. Thousands gathered around the statue, with fireworks and all sorts of other excitement. Minnie was at Predannack in Cornwall and she remembers that she felt quite relieved that the war was over. We married at the end of the war and have enjoyed over sixty years of serving our heavenly Commanding Officer together.



Minnie: Getting engaged and married to Murray

Initially Murray and I had just been friends but as the weeks went along we became closer in our relationship as we went to meetings around the area.

One night we had to walk about ten miles to the base from the village where a meeting had been held. Along the way, we came across a haystack and decided to rest our feet and then fell asleep leaning against the haystack.



I had to be on duty in the morning. We finally got back to the base, and I went on duty. I can remember the WAAFs who shared my billet whispering to each other that I had been out all night!

Murray also took a lot of good-natured teasing from his crew about his relationship with me.

Murray felt he needed a sign from the Lord to say that we should continue our relationship. At that time he applied for a transfer to an all New Zealand crew which meant he would be transferred to another base. His Commanding Officer agreed to put in his application. I was a bit upset when he told me this.

Anyway, it was not long before he told me that he was not going to be transferred after all. The Commanding Officer had found out that Murray was to be replaced with a Canadian pilot and as this Officer did not like Canadians he decided not to let Murray's transfer go through.

Murray took that as the sign from the Lord that we could continue the relationship.

We were engaged in April 1945. Murray knew a man from a church who had been a jeweller and still had some stock of rings at his home. Jewellers shops were all closed due to the war. Murray bought the engagement ring from him and later took me out to breakfast. He put the ring on my finger and so we were engaged.

The war in Europe ended on 8 May 1945 and Murray applied to the New Zealand Government for early release as he wanted to start the Mission Aviation Fellowship.



The Wedding

We were married in Newcastle on 16 June 1945 while both of us were still in the Air Force.



George Curle was the best man. He was a very well known evangelist in New Zealand after the war. He was a Sergeant Navigator in the Air Force and Murray had got to know him when they were training at Rotorua in the early part of the war. George later married a New Zealand girl.

Murray had actually asked Trevor Strong to be the best man but he couldn't make it up to Newcastle. We held our wedding reception at my parents' home in Newcastle. It was really a small family gathering as my Grandmother had recently died and the war had only just finished.

Murray and I were not at the reception. Murray was very sick on our wedding day and went straight back to bed after the service and photos. I was not going to leave him and I stayed up in the bedroom looking after him while the reception took place. George Curle kept the party going and apparently was even under the table at one time and having a great time with my sister Rose.

Murray and I did not have any of the food or even any of our wedding cake, although we do have a photo of it.



The wedding photo we had taken at the studio shows that Murray was not looking well. He had been flying and we had driven all the way from Cornwall to Newcastle and the stress caught up with him.

Jean Orr was a bridesmaid. I don't remember what happened to her but she could not stay long and probably George took her back to the railway station. Jean walked up the aisle with us and that was it. My sister Rose was the other bridesmaid.

I wore my sister-in-law's bridal gear and the bridesmaids had to get their own outfits due to the war being on. I am still embarrassed about that.

Minnie tells the story of their honeymoon

Our honeymoon was spent at Keswick in the Lake District. It was supposed to be for 10 days but was delayed as Murray was still sick after the wedding. Would you believe it! Murray had arranged to hold meetings on every night of our honeymoon. George Curle agreed to do the first few meetings until Murray was well enough to travel.

Then at the end of the honeymoon, I took sick and could hardly talk.

As we were driving back from Keswick to Cornwall, Murray had a relapse of the illness he experienced at the wedding and felt he could not drive any further and needed to lie down. We stopped at a hotel and I went in to ask if I could bring my husband inside for a rest. They were not too keen but when I took Murray inside in his Officer's uniform they changed their tune and were quite attentive. They allowed him to rest on a settee until he felt he could continue with our journey.

After arriving back at the base I became ill and went to the Medical Officer who said I was not to work for a couple of days. He said I could be pregnant but I knew I wasn't. My condition got worse and after a spell in the RAF base sick bay I was admitted to the hospital at Portman. I was taken in a Jeep and remember vividly the very bumpy ride and feeling far from well. There was a separate ward for service people and there were only two of us in the ward.

The other patient was a woman from the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) and me. We were kept apart at each end of the ward as the ATS woman had Tuberculosis. I had kidney trouble and was in hospital for four or five weeks

The hospital also accommodated people shifted from a mental hospital near London as well as other sick people from areas that had been bombed. There was nothing to do all day so I took up needlework and would sit in the sunshine sewing. I remember a magpie kept me company as it came down to steal the coloured cottons.

Finally I was released from hospital and as I was due to be demobbed I did not have to go back to work at the base.

I was given 12 pounds sterling in pay and signed off. We didn't know where we were going to live or anything. We had nothing arranged for our married lives together. We did not even have a settee to sit on or anything else in the way of furniture.

Such faith!

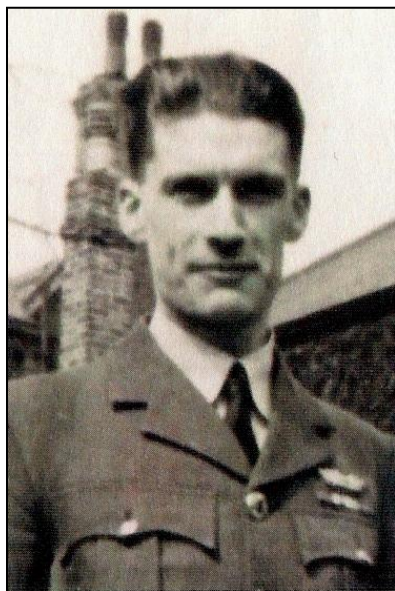
Murray had moved to London when I was in the hospital and was so busy with meetings and the start of MAF he did not come to visit me. By the time I was de-mobbed Murray was up in Silloth conducting meetings and although I was still feeling pretty weak I took a train up to Carlisle with all my gear. What a journey!

A young soldier shared the carriage and he was very attentive, getting me a cup of tea and something to eat. When we arrived at Carlisle he lifted my suitcase from the rack and helped me off the train. Murray, in uniform, was waiting on the platform for me as this soldier helped me off the train. Poor fellow, he did not know whether to salute Murray or shake his hand.

At Silloth we were billeted for the week with two Brethren spinsters, previously missionaries. By this time I was back in civilian clothes and I remember they criticised me for wearing high heel shoes. "It is only pride my dear."

After a week of meetings we drove back to London and had a chance to settle down in the flat we were provided with at the Mildmay Centre in North London.

Murray was often out or away at meetings. One night he arrived home after I had gone to bed. He had brought two people back with him to stay the night. As it was late they were locked out of the building and Murray threw stones at our window to wake me up to let them in.



Murray: Starting the Mission Aviation Fellowship

After flying over the Bay of Biscay and having the vision of using planes to transport missionaries, my squadron Commanding Officer granted me leave to visit Dr Thomas Cochrane. He was president of the Movement for World Evangelisation at the Mildmay Centre. I wanted to talk about the possibility of using aeroplanes to speed up missionary work. After talking to Dr. Cochrane for an hour he said,

“God has laid this on your heart Murray, perhaps He wants you to do something about it yourself. You pray about your vision write an article and I will publish it.”

I returned to Cornwall and prayed with Minnie about our future. This was before the war had ended and we sat down in the YMCA at the base and together wrote a letter to Dr Cochrane. We included the article on my ‘vision’ of using aircraft for missionaries and the Mildmay Centre published it on 5 July 1945.

With the financial help from the Mildmay Centre we were able to start. Dr Cochrane named the organisation Missionary Aviation Fellowship (MAF). He had heard of a group in USA called Christian Airmen’s Missionary Fellowship. We made contact and I flew over to meet them.

Their vision and ours were almost identical and we agreed to work together. They took our name which was later shortened to ‘Mission Aviation Fellowship’. Trevor Strong, a Pathfinder pilot flying Lancaster bombers, joined me. He was committed to return to New Zealand to marry, but wanted to help until then. Others, including Stuart King, joined us and Stuart has told the British MAF story in his book entitled ‘Hope has Wings.’

Minnie adds to the story of how MAF was established in UK

When Murray flew to America to meet up with the American Christian Airmen's Missionary Fellowship that later took the name of MAF he was given some dresses for me. On his return, we found they fitted perfectly and I was wearing one when this photo was taken.



Dr Cochrane and his wife were wealthy and owned the Mildmay Centre. They had bought the whole building which had a big hall like the Town Hall and held 2500 people. As well as the hall there were offices, a men's Bible College, a hospital and flats. These were like the usual London flats on about four floors.

The Mildmay Centre organised a flat for Murray and me. They put in a bathroom and we moved in. We were quite comfortable except that our flat had four flights of stairs and it was hard work carrying our first child Lois up and down.

The Centre provided us with an office for MAF where Murray, on his own, started raising money for MAF. He raised the funds by writing many letters to different organisations, churches and so forth and went around visiting and telling people about his vision.

Murray sometimes used to visit wealthy businessmen who he knew were Christian men, hoping to get funds from them. In some cases it was like getting blood out of a stone. The people who really supported us were the poorer people who would give a fiver a week or something smaller. Often young people when they committed to the Lord, committed to the work itself with a missionary attitude and they gave money sacrificially.

That was the foundation of Mission Aviation Fellowship. I think it only took two years before MAF had sufficient money to buy our first aeroplane and planes were not cheap.



United Nations Witness Team

During this time just after the war had just finished, there were many overseas servicemen hanging around London waiting for their transport to go home. Quite a few of them were keen Christians and Murray got to know an American, Danny James, who was holding prayer meetings in his flat at 15 Quebec Mews.

This group of ex-servicemen joined together and decided they were going to have Gospel meetings on Saturday nights for the servicemen and women waiting for the allocation of transport home. The group called themselves the 'United Nations Witness Team'. We have a book, which has been written, about the team and it has Murray's testimony in it.

They hired a big hall, the Westminster Memorial Hall in London, and people queued right around the streets to get in to the meetings. That is how 'hungry' people were for Christianity after the war.

These meetings continued well into 1946 in various halls in and around London.



Murray: Jack Wyrzten tour around Britain 1946

In 1946 Jack Wyrzten, who I had met in New York, came over from USA and asked me to arrange a tour of Britain for his team. He said he would broadcast from the British Isles every Saturday night for about 6 weeks or so. The Spirit must have led me as I was able to organise it without too much thinking.

Everything worked out in the right order. The tour covered England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales during May and June 1946.

In the photo below I am playing the banjo and singing during the tour. There were Americans, Dutch, Australians and another New Zealander, Trevor Strong, on the tour. The meetings with Jack Wyrzten speaking went on for several weeks.



Minnie: England after the war 1946 to 1949

It was during the time of the Jack Wyrzten tour that we suffered the trauma of losing our first-born child, a wee boy we named Trevor, who through tragic circumstances beyond our control died at only two weeks old on 7 June 1946 in Guys Hospital. I always remember how kind Dr James Orr was to visit me in London and say how sorry he was that we had lost our little boy. He had lost a child too.

A couple of weeks after that time, towards the end of the tour, I joined the team. The three photos below were taken on the ship as we were going to Ireland.



The singer and song leader on the tour with Jack Wyrzten was a teacher at a Christian College in USA. He and his wife wanted to take me back with them to have a holiday and suggested I had my voice trained there. I did not want to go off to America and leave Murray.

Murray has sometimes said that it might have been very different if I had taken up the offer. But there was no way I was going to leave Murray.

After the United Nations Witness Team work ended, the leaders said we must continue the meetings for a while. So we did a six or eight week stint in a smaller hall in the winter time. Again, people were queuing on the streets outside to get in. If anyone was thrown out of the hall for being unruly we then had room for one more to come inside!

A Bible study night was also organised in London. We still correspond with some of the people who made up the teams and one of them wrote to us recently. Roy and Ruth Snyder were missionaries in the Central African Republic until they retired in 1983. He always sent us a Christmas card and then a letter when his wife died.

Some folks lent us their house in Essex for a holiday so we said we would do a Christmas dinner for anyone who was at a loose end. One of our friends who came was a really tall American guy and I, being tiny, was dwarfed by him. The big 'horror' called out to me from the top of the table "Get off your knees Minnie!" He still has his sense of humour. We cooked a Christmas dinner and had a great time. Quite a few came down for the dinner including Jean Orr who was studying the Bible in London and was later a missionary for years in Morocco, North Africa. Jean had been a WAAF and the Sergeant in charge of the Mess at Silloth.

The Americans were good and they would bring me food. Somehow or other, I think it was through Jack Wyrzten that we were introduced to George Whittaker who flew for Pan American Airways. Each time he came to London he would bring me canned food and a product like the Kremelta we get now.

He also brought me 'floating soap', which was fun for our baby daughter Lois.

Many of the Bible college students used to come up to our flat looking for cups of tea and we got to know quite a few. One of the students became the principal of a Bible college in Australia and several of them became Baptist ministers. We were invited to the China Inland Mission building just across the road from the Mildmay Centre to have a meal with them and I was the only woman. The principal sat at the head of the table, each student had to stand up and introduce himself, and I thought, "What am I doing here?"

After the war we started with nothing. Everything was from second hand shops and we had to have ration coupons for blankets and sheets. The Mildmay Centre supplied a little wooden table and chairs and installed a gas Califont so that we could have hot water. We lived in the flat for four years and did not have to pay rent.

At one time I wasn't well as I was getting over my kidney problem and I said to Murray that I would lie down in the spare room that was separate from the flat. We put a divan, a bed settee, and an organ in that room. I told Murray that if I wanted anything I would bang on the floor and he might hear me. I was in there when Dr Hallam Howie a missionary doctor from China (his son was a Baptist minister at Petone for a while) came to see me.

He must have thought that we were in dire straits as he left a pound note behind on the table. He was also our doctor when we came to live in Auckland and I have always been so embarrassed and have often thought, "Should I thank him for that pound." It was so thoughtful of him but I was so embarrassed about people leaving us money.

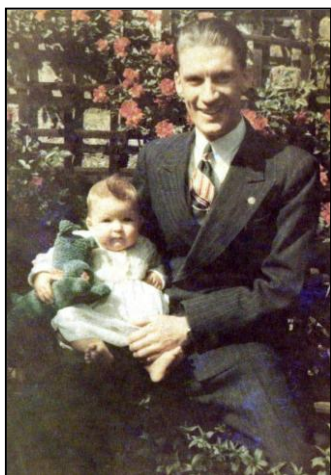
In July 1947, we went on a holiday to Cornwall with an Austin 10 car which had been bought from one of the crew for sixty pounds. In this photo Rose Cook is driving and I am sitting beside her.



We also took a caravan. In the photo below Joan is on the left, I am in the middle, and Rose Cook is on the right. Joan and Rose both worked in the MAF office.



Lois was born on 5 November 1947 and the photo with Murray was taken at the Mildmay Centre in London. The next photo was taken on the beach at Newcastle.



In 1949 Lois would have been around 18 months when we went to Ireland for an MAF meeting and holiday.

The guesthouse was called Ballyholm.

Lois and Murray are in front of Giant's Causeway.



Lois walking with the 1940s 'buggy.'
and other photos of Lois.



Minnie: Moving to New Zealand in 1949

In 1949 Mr L.B. Miller who owned the large Millers department store in Christchurch was the Mildmay representative in Christchurch, New Zealand. He was concerned about young people's ignorance of the Gospel and wrote to Dr Cochrane asking if he would recommend someone to go to New Zealand for six months. They were to join an Australian, George Brown, to evangelise the young people of the South Island of New Zealand.

Mr Miller had planned a six-month tour that would visit almost every high school, district high school and college as well as holding open air meetings everywhere around South island. Dr Cochrane after unsuccessfully trying to get someone from the Bible school to take it on and knowing Murray's passion for evangelism suggested that we go to New Zealand.

The British MAF seemed to be doing well at that time and Murray saw the Miller offer as an opportunity to encourage New Zealand MAF as well as work for Mr Miller and so we agreed to go.

We did not have much time and so we left everything behind in England in the flat. My sister had to go and sort it all out later. She sold what she could, kept some things for herself and sent out to New Zealand items we asked for like our china cabinet, the washing machine and our bed.

Mr Miller paid for a first class passage for us from England to New Zealand and that is how we came to live here.

We said 'Goodbye' to my family and friends in England. This photo was taken at Victoria station as we were leaving for the ship that was to take us to New Zealand.

In the photo are my Mum, Nana, George, Edie, Rose and Eric Cook and David Hood, a Baptist Minister.



Five weeks on a ship

The five weeks on a passenger ship, Orontes, travelling first class was quite delightful after the work we had been doing.

Orontes



I had to have an evening dress for the formal nights on board, such as the balls. Someone gave one to me, as I had never had an evening dress before. It was very nice.

There were many Australians on board and some very friendly people in first class. There was a group of matrons from Australia at one table. They called Murray over to ask him questions about his work and were very interested in MAF. They filled up their glasses and drank a toast to the MAF.

Murray, as usual, had a Bible study on the ship for anybody on board who was interested. They were good Bible studies and we would sing a song or two before we started. We thought we would have had more people attending had we been in the second class cabins but those passengers were not allowed up to first class. Passengers were advised of the Bible studies through the ship's notices.

We arrived in New Zealand at the end of November with Lois who was then two years old and stayed in Auckland for Christmas.

Murray decided to invite his friends to his mother's place for a cup of tea. It was a lovely fine day and we were sitting out in the garden. I can't remember who they all were except just one Arnold Thomas who said to me "You were lucky weren't you." I asked "Why," and he said "To marry Murray." I replied, "I don't know about that, I think he was lucky to get me." I wasn't going to be told I was the 'lucky bride.'

Lois had caught whooping cough, probably from her cousins when we arrived in Auckland. She was quite sick and we were told that if we took her up flying to a certain height, that it would cure the whooping cough. Murray was away and I was on my own and not very keen on flying. I was a bit nervous, despite being in the Air Force for years. Murray's sister Nancy offered to take her up and Harry Bailey paid for the plane. The flight made a big difference and Lois got over the whooping cough quite quickly.

Minnie: The South Island Tour 1950 to 1951

After Christmas we went down to Christchurch to start on the six-month tour arranged by Mr Miller. He owned a big home in Cashmere and we stayed there once or twice. I was quite upset one time when Lois who was two, rubbed toothpaste into the carpet. I had trouble trying to get it out as the toothpaste took the colour out of the carpet. The house was managed by a couple and used for missionary folk and was a very nice place.



Millers
Department
Store in
Christchurch

It was arranged that we would travel with George Brown, an Australian, and share the tour work. We were supplied with a large custom-made van with 'Mildmay Movement' painted right across the front and a sixteen-foot caravan. We lived in the well-equipped caravan and George lived in the van. We tootled right around the South Island in this big vehicle visiting schools and holding meetings. I used to look out of the van at the side of the road and think, "I don't want to go over there". I did not like the roads.

I remember my first ever experience of an earthquake was on that tour. I was by myself and thought at first that it was a cow rubbing up against the side of the caravan!



We had so many meetings during that time. There were church meetings at night as well as going around all of the schools during the day. All three of us witnessed in pubs, dance halls, factories, meat works, on the streets and in churches. We got a good reception wherever we went and there were many conversions too.

The Salvation Army Officer at Balclutha thought our visit was too good not to make use of and he organised meetings everywhere from coffee bars and private homes to churches. He arranged 57 meetings in 10 days!

I will never forget one night in Balclutha, when in the dark and the snow we drove the wrong way and found we were driving on the railway line! But we had fun as well, as these photos of climbing the Franz Joseph Glacier show.



We went to dance halls and at half time or suppertime when the orchestra stepped down we would open up. Murray played the banjo and I would sing, just as we did at the open-air meetings and the coffee bars. George Brown had to return to Australia and Ken Fowler joined us and helped for the rest of the year.

Raising support for MAF New Zealand

Murray took the opportunity to spread the word about Mission Aviation Fellowship as we travelled the South Island and the support for MAF steadily grew. Mr Miller may not have been too happy about it but Murray persisted.

While Murray was in London at Mildmay he wrote several articles on the British Mission Aviation Fellowship for the 'Challenge'. This was a New Zealand Christian paper founded by Keith Rimmer and Murray continued to contribute after he arrived in New Zealand. A support group had been established to send funds to MAF in England and recruit pilots and engineers. Some people began training as pilots with the view to applying for MAF work.

We were supposed to go back to MAF in Britain and although Mr Miller paid us an allowance in New Zealand, he had only paid our passage one way. We had no money of our own and could not return to England.

Unknown to us, both the UK MAF and the Mildmay Centre began to suffer financial stress and that was why we did not receive the expected request to return to London. We tried to borrow the money for our fares but as we were not able to and so we were left here in New Zealand. I often think that I was really brought here under false pretences! We had no home in New Zealand and what little we owned had been left in England.

Murray: Youth for Christ & MAF 1950's

Early in 1952 Youth for Christ approached me and asked me to become a director of the Auckland Youth for Christ Rally. We worked for Youth for Christ in Auckland for ten years.

Minnie and I didn't have a home but had our own little caravan with a tiny wood burning stove and a chimney that went out the window. We could cook our food on the top of the stove. We used to park in the back yards of the houses of people we knew or were accommodated in the back rooms of halls or churches. We would put the backless forms together and put our mattress on them for beds. We interacted with the YFC kids. It was great work to be involved in as we held rallies every month and we frequently filled the Auckland Town Hall.

Minnie adds to the story of the Youth for Christ work in Auckland

Many of the young folk, about fifty - sixty of them, came for a tea on Tuesdays. We originally had the meal in the Sunday School Hall under the Baptist Tabernacle in Upper Queen Street but later we moved further down Queen Street to the Sunday School Union building. I would organise and cook the tea. We had the same fare every week. We had casserole and mashed potatoes in the winter and luncheon sausage and salad in the summer. There was a shop selling cream sponge cakes around the corner in Karangahape Road and we used to get cream sponges for dessert every week.

We had great fun and the kids used to help clean up. We would sing and Murray took a series of teachings at that time. One was on how a Christian should act, like having good manners, keeping your word and all those sorts of subjects that are part of a Christian life.

It was during this time that our twins Linda (Linnie) and Joy were born on 3 July 1952. They were 4 years and 9 months younger than Lois. I had cooked for the young people one night and the twins were born the next day. Someone made a comment to us about having 'twins' based on Psalm 127:5 "Happy are those who have a quiver full of them." I knew very early on that we were having twins but we did not have scans and suchlike in those days. It was a bit of a shock and made life very busy.

I continued to cook the tea at the Auckland YFC weekly meetings. We took our newborn twins with us and the young people were great as they used to help look after them. For many years we went to the Youth for Christ Easter Camps which were held at Eastern Beach in Auckland.

The camp belonged to the Brethren Church. It is now all in chalets. We would take all the YFC kids out there and have great times. There was a great big bunkhouse up-stairs where all the young folk slept and the meetings were held down-stairs. I recall the kitchen stove was run on diesel and as I did the cooking, black smoke used to puff smuts out all over the place.

After we had the twins I was often left on my own with Lois, Joy and Linda while Murray went to the camps and it seemed he was hardly ever home.

We tried to do a lot of things to keep the young folk interested on Saturdays nights. We took them to Torbay where Murray's parents owned a Bach. I don't know where we got the boat from but we would take some of the young people paddling around the island.



Photo of the Bach at Torbay.

In those days we had some good pianists, but they were hard to come by, and we did not have good sound equipment like today. The Council allowed us to have amplifiers in Civic Square for our Saturday night open-air meetings. We used to get quite a good crowd in the 1950s including a few drunks heckling us.

We used to have a big birthday rally every year in the Town Hall. They were good days.

Some of the attendees have never forgotten us. We still have a lot of friends from that time and they keep in contact. A lot of them became nurses. Some became ministers and some missionaries.

Below is a photo taken at one of the Youth For Christ. It pictures a ten times enlargement of a birthday card sent from YFC International. When it was opened, the girl in the crinoline dress stood motionless until Murray handed her a microphone. She 'came to life' and burst into song.





Ivan Bowan, shearing a sheep at a YFC Rally



Minnie being presented with a bouquet of flowers

Murray: MAF work 1950's

At the same time as I was working for Youth for Christ an MAF committee was formed with the immediate goal of support for the British work. Another goal was to establish a New Zealand role in the South East Asian mission field. The first chairman of the committee, later called the Board, was Trevor Strong. He was stirring up interest in Auckland and the north of New Zealand.

Many New Zealand pilots and engineers served with the Australian staff and it was wonderful to see how God's blessing rested on the rapidly expanding work.

One year I had travelled to Singapore on a free flight provided by RNZAF and came back on a commercial flight. I went to see if MAF could be established there but it was not possible at that time. MAF operates in Asia now.

While there I stayed with an old friend Matt Finlay who was a missionary to the islands south of Singapore and took the opportunity to go out with him evangelising. Matt was one of our old gang of young keen Christians and Bible students who would sometimes sit up until two o'clock in the morning poring over the Scriptures.

In 1957, Edwin 'Harry' Hartwig had asked that an Australian group who wanted to begin flying missionaries in New Guinea be also called MAF and this was gladly agreed to. Harry Hartwig had pioneered the service based out of Port Moresby. The New Guinea Highlands area is one of the world's most dangerous flying localities with mostly cloud-covered high mountains. While flying there 'Harry' was tragically killed when he was unable to find a clear route through to his destination.



In 1959 MAF NZ was established as an Incorporated Society.

In 1961 the first NZ staff, Doug and Glenis Hunt, were sent to PNG.

Minnie: Life in Auckland in the 1950's

When we arrived from England in 1949 we could have lived with Murray's parents at Lewin Road, Epsom, but I was not comfortable there as they were elderly and I didn't really know them. Their New Zealand

family and grandchildren had known each other for years, whereas I had come in with Lois and we were like strangers.



One time when Murray went to Singapore to promote MAF, Lois and I did stay at Lewin Road and I gave what help I could. I cut the lawns of the three quarter acre section and the tennis court and cleared up the leaves.

I thought I was in paradise in that big garden. It was a lovely place and a lot different to my parent's home in Newcastle with a pocket size garden back and front. After Murray's parents died the tennis court was subdivided from the property and then it was all sold. It was not what Murray's mother had wished as she wanted somebody to live in the big house and leave it as it was.

I did not want to be dependent on Murray's family or on anybody really, as I had not been brought up like that.

Our first real home in 1953

When I became pregnant with the twins, Joy and Linda we still did not have a home. We rented two rooms from a couple in the Church and had to share their bathroom, the kitchen, and the laundry. It was a very old, cold house and after I had the twins I would sleep in one bedroom with one cot on each side of the bed and Lois had to sleep on the settee. Someone in YFC suggested we apply for a State House.

A woman came to interview us. I was sick with septicaemia after having the twins and I wasn't allowed to get out of bed. The woman came in, saw me sick in bed with cots on each side, went back to the office and put us on top of the waiting list. She must have told them of our situation as we were the next ones to get a state house. Joy and Linda (twins) are in the photo below.



The state house, a brand new one that had only just been completed, was on Shore Road at the bottom of Victoria Avenue in Remuera. The house was so handy and very convenient and nice. We moved in there but we did not own much. People who had been overseas in the forces were given a grant of one hundred pounds for furnishing and that helped us a lot as one hundred pounds would go a long way in those days.

Hazel and Archie Elliott gave us a carpet from Farmers and we carpeted the stairs and lounge.

We had our bed sent out to us from England. It had shrapnel holes in it. We established ourselves in Remuera and were quite comfortable. It was a two storey double unit and we had nice neighbours. There was a bus stop nearby and a large paddock in front of our unit.

The Tornado

While living in the state house in Auckland we experienced a tornado. The twins were just babies at the time.

We had a view right out to sea from our house and I could see this water spout out at sea. It was coming towards us and I was thinking, "What is going to happen?" School was just coming out, Lois was at the Parnell primary school, and I wondered what to do.

I knew I would have to go and get her but Joy and Linda were having their sleep. I remember thinking, "Lord you will just have to look after the twins as I am getting the bus up to the school". I didn't get the bus but I ran up Brighton road and met Lois at the top of the road as she was setting out to walk home.

I said to Lois, "We have got to run" as I could see this water spout still coming in. We started to run down the road and at the little dairy about half way down, the wind picked up a rubbish bin. Up into the sky it went and just disappeared.

I was so scared and my thoughts were of the twins at home. A woman stopped her car and asked if she could give us a ride. I said "Oh yes please, I have left two little ones in bed."

She said, "I won't drive through but I will drop you at the bottom of the road," which she did. We had just got inside our house and the tornado came straight through. I watched out of the window and saw the bus shelter near our place get knocked over and the tornado continue on and take iron from a roof.

There was a truck parked on the road outside as some workmen were cutting the grass across the road. I went out when the wind died down and the men said their mate was in the bus stop.

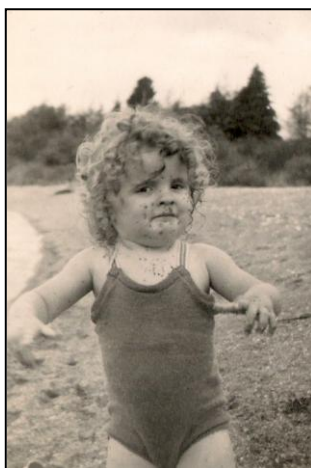
I ran to the bus stop and found the man had been behind the bus shelter and not in it. It had landed on top of him. I ran back home to get a blanket for him and he was still conscious at that stage. He said, "I don't want to die. I am meeting my girl-friend tonight."

I replied, "You are not going to die" and put the blanket over him. I heard later that he had died on the way to hospital. He was twenty-one, poor kid.

I will always remember the panic I was in. The wind took only a few tiles from our house. There was a big pile of timber nearby and it was picked up and scattered like match sticks. The tornado was headlines in the paper next day reporting how the poor man was killed.

After that I have quite a respect for tornados. It was a bit like experiencing the bombs during the war. It was another really traumatic time.

Below are some photos of the twins, Joy and Linda. The first photo has Joy, Linda and Lois in it.



Minnie finds employment in Auckland

I took a few part time jobs to help with our finances. I decided we had to make some money to keep the house and pay the rent and so on. The first work I remember was painting little metal toy soldiers at home. I am not an artist by any means and I don't know how I did it as some of them were really intricate with tartan kilts to paint.

Later I went to clean the flat of the matron of a private hospital in Victoria Avenue, Remuera. However, I only stayed one day. The matron had a teenage daughter who left her clothes strewn all over her bedroom, didn't make her bed or do anything to help so I thought. "If you think I am coming here to clean up and make your bed, you have another 'think' coming" so I did not go back.

I applied for and got a part time job in the canteen at the Auckland Public hospital. By then the twins were two and a half and they could go into the free kindergarten in Queen Street in the City, when I was working at the hospital canteen. I could walk up from Shore Road and through the Domain. Murray would pick the twins up and then collect me on the way home.

So we had an income and in those days the government gave parents a family benefit of so much a child. With three children I got eighteen pounds a month (\$36) and I tried to save some but it usually went to buy clothes and so on. My Mum in England used to send good-sized parcels of clothes, which I really appreciated.

Next, I saw an advertisement for someone to go and clean the Methodist Church in Remuera. By this time the twins were over three and were able to go to kindergarten a few hours a day.

I took on that job which was quite good. I cleaned the big hall, polished the brass rails along the front of the altar and all the other brass as well as cleaned the kitchen. My pay to do that work was twenty-five shillings (\$2.50). I did that until Murray was going to England on a business trip and we went with him. When I returned they said they would like me to go back and clean the Church and they would increase the money but I said "No."

Minnie tells how Murray started inventing as a business

Before we went to England we were still working for both Youth for Christ and Mission Aviation Fellowship but Murray was also inventing. He bought a very old house in Parnell from an aunt and that was where he was making his inventions, preparing MAF mail-out envelopes and doing things for YFC.

It was quite a busy time but it was good. We would get about five to ten young people to come to the old house to help write out up to 5000 addresses on the envelopes being sent out on behalf of MAF. It was a kind of 'fellowship', we would get everything organised and work together. They were a great bunch of young people.

Murray has always been an inventor, putting things together and has enjoyed mathematics. He has always had an inventive brain and enjoyed using it.

He designed and made the 'boiling water unit'. This unit provided boiling water which came out of a tap over a sink. He got them onto the market through his company Mercury Electrical Ltd and installed some in cafes in and around Auckland. They became known and eventually Zip Industries Ltd heard about the boiler units and approached Murray to join their firm.

Murray: Family Trip to Europe in 1957

A few years before joining Zip I decided we would go to England to look at patenting the water boiler and also to have a holiday with the family.

We were still living in Auckland when we went to England, all five of us. It was part holiday and part business.

I wanted to investigate patent rights and things in connection with the water boiler I had designed. I had far too much faith in patents in those days. You think that when you have a patent you are covered, but it did not work like that.

Minnie and I flew across to New York to investigate a patent for the boiler units and we took one unit with us and gave that one to Bev Shea.

Whilst in America I also spoke at a Youth for Christ rally before going back to England. The children stayed with Minnie's parents in Newcastle.

At that time it was difficult to buy a new car in New Zealand unless you could use sterling currency. If a car was bought while in England, the car had to be kept overseas for 12 months before it could be shipped to New Zealand to avoid customs duty and tax. I had decided to buy a Goliath Car made in Germany by one of the Borgward group. It was a two-stroke car, very comfortable and very well designed. I went over to Europe from England to buy the car and then drove many miles across Europe to Holland. I caught the ferry and arrived back in England, picked up Minnie's sister Edie and George and drove back to Newcastle in a 'pea-souper' fog.

We were in England when the person who had put money into the Mercury Electrical Ltd business to help start the company, wrote to me and suggested that I should fly back home. He had heard from somebody that my business partner had copied my drawings and was designing and manufacturing his own boiler unit on the quiet.

He said it was important that I returned to Auckland before the partner got too far. He sent me the fare to fly home. So Minnie was left at her Mum and Dad's in Newcastle with the three girls.

Once back in New Zealand, the person who had put some money into the business said that the only thing we could do was to let that man join our company. It was not what we wanted to do, but that's what we did.

Minnie stays on in England for five months with the children

Murray returned to New Zealand and I was left in England with the children. I did not realise at first but I was expected to wait for five more months until the twelve months for the car-shipping requirement had expired. When the time was nearly up I found it hard to book a sea passage for an adult with three children.

In the end I got so frustrated that I wrote to the New Zealand High Commissioner and told him of my plight. I got approval to ship the car earlier than the 12 months and the High Commissioner organised Thomas Cooks to allocate the three children and me a four-berth cabin to return home! We sailed for New Zealand on 19 December 1957 on the S.S. Rangitiki.

Minnie: The true story of the ‘Buzzy Bee’

Before the trip to England in 1957 Hec Ramsay had asked Murray to bring back to New Zealand the toy ‘Buzzy Bee.’

Hec Ramsay had a toy factory and he wanted to copy the Buzzy Bee and sell it in New Zealand. We bought six of the Buzzy bees when we were in USA and brought them back to New Zealand for him. Several months ago I heard somebody talking about the ‘Buzzy Bee’ on TV and that it had been designed in New Zealand.



That was not true, it was an American toy that a New Zealander copied!

Murray: Zip Industries & Upper Hutt 1960 to 70s

We had a lot of friends in Auckland and were still working with Youth for Christ and MAF. But we had no regular income at all. We had done very well to bring up our children with what we had, as over the years we had very little to keep ourselves going.

One day, I received a telephone call from the General Manager of Zip Industries Ltd General Manager in Nelson saying that they were having a directors meeting in Auckland and they would like me to come along to the hotel to meet them, which I did. They seemed to be fascinated by the fact I had spent so many years doing Christian work and asked lots of questions about that.

Then they invited me to join the firm as Product Designer. I had no engineering degree or certificates but they had seen what I had designed and liked what I was doing.

Minnie and I fully discussed the Zip offer. It included a good salary, expenses for running our own car and later a company car would be provided, as well as assistance to get a loan and a mortgage through the bank to buy a house. We had to make a decision and we were sure it was the right thing for us.

The company made it very easy for us to move to Upper Hutt. We felt the Lord was giving us this opportunity and it was a sign for us to move on as our health was suffering at that time.

We made the decision and Zip shifted us from Auckland to Wellington in 1961. I was 45 and had been in Christian work for more than twenty-five years including my war service.

Lois was at college by then and the twins were still at primary school. The one most affected by the move was Lois because she was at Epsom Girls Grammar and had her friends there. However, we thought she would get over that and she did.

Leaving Auckland was sad, but it was the best thing that could have happened to us. Some people criticised us for moving out of Christian work but they were the sort of people who had plenty of money and they did not know the extent of what we had achieved. We had lived in a State house for quite a few years but when we moved from Auckland we went into a house rented for us by Zip in Upper Hutt.

We later moved into the Baptist Manse, as it was empty, and lived there while Hudson Salisbury was building our own house, which was completed for us at a very reasonable rate. When we were in the Manse the Church were extending their own building so Minnie was busy making scones for the workers on the site.

My daughter Lois and I drew up the plans for our house at 1 Charles Street Upper Hutt. It was a very nice home inside and almost maintenance free. It got quite a bit of sun and had a neat garden out the back. Minnie always preferred the design of this Upper Hutt house to that of Bushey Way. It was a real thrill when finally we moved into our own house after all those years of making do with whatever was available before we got the state house. The children loved it.

There was quite a large area of lawn at Charles Street and I found I did not have the energy to do the lawns on a Saturday morning after working all week. We arranged for a young man from church to do the lawns for us.

When we built the house in Upper Hutt, Zip guaranteed us a loan from the bank to help pay for the house. We eventually paid off the Bank loan. We still kept the low interest rate mortgage for ex-servicemen at 3.5%. We were reluctant to pay it off as the low interest being charged was an advantage to us.

When I had started inventing in the Mercury Electrical business and designed the water boilers I had put my Ford 10 car into the business as part of my share capital. When I left Mercury Electrical I left our car in with the business as well as all the shares we had in the company. I wasn't a good businessman. I was not tough enough. I just walked away from the business and took odd jobs including maintenance on the boiler units I had designed in a few Auckland restaurants. It was during this period that Zip had approached me to join their firm.

When we left Auckland to take up the position with Zip, I approached a friend and asked if he would take over the running of Youth for Christ from us. Sam agreed and did a good job. We felt it was good timing that YFC should have a younger person as director.

MAF was well established although we still remained on the board. By the 1960s MAF's requirements were for staff with high technical qualifications and business skills and that indicated to me that I should place my MAF responsibilities in more capable hands.

I worked for Zip for twenty years until I retired from them at the age of sixty-five. I started at Taita where I had an office and access to a workshop. I had an American/German, Gerry Luhman, working with me as a model maker. He was excellent at his trade and would not sign anything off unless it was perfect.

I later went to the Naenae factory before finally moving to the Lower Hutt factory. It was my job to design new products or make improvements to existing products.

The first thing I was asked to do was design a thermostat for the electric fry pan. We have one here at home that we are still using today. One of the earlier improvements was to the Zip automatic pop-up toaster that had been copied from an American one. It needed different elements and a more scientific way of setting them up. The company bought dozens of loaves of bread and we tested the toasters by making lots of toast. I thought this was not very scientific so I figured out a way to measure the way it cooked.

I invented the 'black heaters' that were used in all sorts of places including halls, churches, schools, and farmers' sheds.

Murray and Minnie join the Upper Hutt Baptist Church

Soon after arriving in Upper Hutt we joined the Upper Hutt Baptist church. I ran the Youth Group at the Church for five years and was an Elder for many years. We used to go preaching around the area and went to Otaki several times. They did not have a Pastor and the Church seemed to like us to go up there. We also preached in Stokes Valley, to a nurse's Christian Fellowship at the Lower Hutt hospital and to a Wainuiomata home group. We certainly got around. We really enjoyed our time at Upper Hutt. Minnie said she would go back to live in Upper Hutt at any time, as she liked the town.

We bought a caravan. Minnie was working in Whitcoulls at the time and thought it would be good to have a few breaks from work at the weekends. Well that did not happen very often.

We had a home group, we were busy in the Church and to go away for a weekend was a rare thing. We gave our loyalty there and would think “We just can’t go this weekend”, and it got to be like that most weekends.

Waikanae Christian Holiday Camp

I was involved as a trustee at the El Rancho, Waikanae Christian Holiday Park since it was purchased in 1961. Those involved in establishing the interdenominational camp included a Presbyterian minister, Hudson Salisbury, Bill Crichton who owned the timber mill at Otaki and John Champion. The camp was originally farmland before it was bought by the Trust. It has been a good undertaking.

The Trust allowed some of the original trustees to build a house on a piece of the land they had chosen and those houses are still there. The first one as you drive in was Hudson Salisbury’s, another was for John Champion who has since died and another for Bill Crichton. There were about five houses built by trustees. They could use the houses but could not sell them as they were to go back into the trust.

We decided we would not build one as Lois already had her Bach down at the Waikanae beach and we could use that at any time. Bill Crichton later built his own Camp at Forest Lakes further north of Waikanae. Maungaraki Baptist Church had a church camp there. There was a big old house at Forest Lakes and we stayed there with Jim and Kath McLean. The camp was quite well established with plenty of bathrooms though it could be very cold in winter.

Minnie: Employment 1960 to 70s

When we came to live in Upper Hutt in 1961 I took a part time temporary job in a coffee bar in Main Street. I then worked for Smith and Nephew and this was my first full time job since coming out of the Air Force. I took the job as Lois was about to marry and we needed some money to give her a nice wedding. Smith and Nephew were just opening in Upper Hutt and they made up all of the sterile packs for the hospitals. These packs went through the Gamma Ray at Wallaceville for sterilising. I worked at Smith and Nephew for six years and became a charge hand before I left. The lady in charge was a Christian and attended our church so we got on quite well. Then a decision was made to close the Gamma Ray plant in Upper Hutt and the company shifted all of the plant back to Auckland.

Doris Silver, a member of the Upper Hutt Baptist church and the manager of Whitcoulls Upper Hutt asked me to come and work at the shop. I had never worked in a bookshop. My jobs had always been mundane jobs. I did not know much about dictionaries and that sort of thing. Doris said that I was not to worry about that and so I agreed. Whitcoulls later closed the shop in Upper Hutt and transferred Doris to Lower Hutt. She asked me to go to Lower Hutt with her. I said, "OK but only as a part time staff member". There were several times when I was unofficially the manager when managers left. For a while I did it on my ordinary pay until I said "Don't I get any money for managing this shop?" As a result, they did give me a bit more money.

When Doris was moved to the Whitcoulls shop in James Smith in Wellington, I went with her again. I said, "Doris, I was going to retire years ago and I keep going around with you".

We went to work in her car to Wellington and after work we had to walk up to The Terrace to get the car and then it was usually bumper to bumper on the Hutt Road to get home. Sometimes it was as late as seven o'clock before we got home. Eventually I decided to stop working at Whitcoulls and I 'retired'!

I had one more job after that. It was as the tea lady on alternate weeks in Levin House in Lower Hutt where Murray was then working for A.J. Park and Son the patent attorneys and solicitors. I was in my 60's and was told that when I reached the age of 65 I would have to retire, and this time I did!

Minnie: A Trip to England 1975

I was working and saved up enough money to go over to England as I felt a responsibility to visit my family in Newcastle. The girls were married or old enough to look after themselves. Murray was still working for Zip Holdings Ltd.

I was in England on my holiday when I received a letter from Murray to say he was going to join me in England. I said "How?" And do you know what? The manager of Zip had said to Murray "Where is your wife?" When Murray told them, they said they would send him over to England too. I said, "That is terrible, I have saved up for months and months so I could go to England and here you are getting it all handed to you on a plate!"

Murray

The boss of Zip asked me if my wife was coming to a party that the company was putting on for the staff and I said, "No, she is overseas." He asked where she was and I replied "England."

He asked, "Why didn't you go with her?" I said, "I didn't think about asking for leave."

Soon after, the company paid me to go and join Minnie in England. Ford Lower Hutt supplied a new red station wagon for us to use while we were in England.

Minnie

I went for three months to stay with my parents in England and Murray had about a month with us. It was very good of Zip and it was a perfect summer in England, no rain, no cloud and no wind.

That was about 1975. I was working with Smith and Nephew at that stage and it was when I came back that they said they were moving all of their plant back to Auckland.

We had a lovely holiday together in England. We used to sleep in the big red station wagon. We would ask somebody if we could park in the area. I remember one night we parked at the back of a hotel.

In some ways, we have been adventurous. We even flew over to Paris for a weekend. Murray was going there to see somebody about solar heating. Paris is a pretty expensive city, so before we went I shopped at Marks and Spencer's and bought some lovely little cakes and pork pies which lasted quite a while. Murray said "What are you taking food over there for?" I said "Well we might want it." Sure enough we were glad as food was so expensive.

We went onto a boat tied up on the River Seine. There was a machine on the boat we could put money in for food. We got a frankfurter out of one and chips out of another.

A man came up and asked did we want him to barbeque them for us and we said, "Yes please". There was also a wagon down on the wharf selling chips and that's how we managed.

We went to a restaurant once in Paris and had French soup, which was horrible, the cheese on top was stringy and we couldn't eat it. I said, "I would sooner have lunch down on the boat!"

We weren't staying in a hotel but had nice accommodation anyway. We had croissants for breakfast, where we were staying; at the little breakfast place downstairs. It was near the Arc de Triomphe and quite central.

Murray: From Zip to A. J. Park and Son 1982

I had been working almost twenty years for Zip Industries Ltd and was due to retire at age sixty-five. Minnie was looking through the Upper Hutt Leader about this time and saw in an advertisement that A.J. Park and Son wanted a retired man to work in their Patent Library. Minnie could see that it was just the job for me. I knew the people at Parks through taking out and investigating patents for Zip. I inquired about the job and sure enough they were more than willing to hold the position open for me until I completed my time at Zip. I did not want to retire early from Zip as that company was contributing to my retirement plan and that was not available until I reached the age of sixty-five. I could have retired at age sixty but Zip was going through changes and wanted to keep me on.

The job at Parks was very interesting. It was very convenient and I had a car park supplied. I worked for A.J. Park and Sons for nineteen and a half years until 2001.

Murray: Retired, but still working for the Lord

I felt a bit helpless when it came time to retire properly after two lots of twenty years with different employers. However, it worked out well as both Minnie and I had qualified for National Superannuation when we turned sixty and we had managed to accumulate some savings with the help of a retirement payment I received from Zip Industries Ltd, in addition to the superannuation plan.

We were always careful with money, as we never had much to 'throw around.' Like most people we had a struggle in our earlier days, but they were happy years in so many ways.

We shifted from Upper Hutt in 1986 and came to live in Bushey Way. Maungaraki Baptist Church was about to be established around that time. Paul Martel, (Lois' husband) knew that I had my eye on the house at 25 Bushey Way as we liked the view from the house and also because it was near to the home of Paul and Lois.

A Christian family was living in the Bushey Way house. The owner and Paul were on a Christian committee together and when the owner told Paul he was moving up to Auckland he let us know the house could be up for sale. I telephoned the owner, soon negotiated a deal, and paid him on the spot.

We later sold the house at 1 Charles Street, Upper Hutt and settled into living at 25 Bushey Way.

Murray and Minnie: Friends and Family

We have made and remained good friends with many lovely people in America, England and all around the world.

George Beverley Shea (Bev Shea)

We have been friends with Bev Shea for a long time and have been with Bev on many occasions. When he first went to London with Billy Graham, he introduced us to Billy Graham at that time. Then in 1959 when the first Billy Graham Crusade was in New Zealand, we were living in Auckland.. Bev brought his wife Irma and their children with him. Elaine was then about 13 and their son Ron a bit older. Bev did not want the news media to know he had his children with him and he asked if they could stay with us and Lois and the Shea children got on well. We were in the choir for the Crusade.



Bev Shea turned 60 when the family were in Auckland and he invited us out to a restaurant for dinner to celebrate his birthday.

When we went to New York in connection with Murray's invention of the boiler units, we met up again with Bev Shea and went out with him one evening along with the White sisters.

We all drove quite a way to this meeting. Afterwards Bev said, “We have got to get something to eat.” He never ate before he sang. We all went and had steaks and then travelled back to New York. We were staying with folk just out of New York at that time but when we got to New York Bev said, “You can’t go back to those folk at this time of night, come and stay in the hotel with me”. So Bev booked us in and we stayed the night in the hotel at his expense.

He came to New Zealand and held an open-air crusade in Wellington. We were living in Upper Hutt and Bev Shea invited us to have breakfast with him at his hotel somewhere in Oriental Bay.

Another time Bev came to New Zealand on a private trip and he took us out for a meal. He was absolutely a lovely man, really very thoughtful. We have a number of his records and his book which he has signed for us and I have kept the last letter he sent to us. His wife Irma died of cancer and he married again and was very happy with his second wife. He was on TV on the Crystal Cathedral programme one Sunday morning. We always put that programme on and were surprised and delighted to see him and his wife.

Bev Shea (below) celebrated his 102nd birthday on Feb 1 2011



Jack Wyrzten was another good friend who came to New Zealand a few times. He bought a camp in the South Island and had quite a bit to do with Cecil Hilton who had a camp up at Rotorua. They were in the Brethren circle and as such had friends everywhere. On one visit when Jack and his wife came to New Zealand they stayed with us in Upper Hutt.

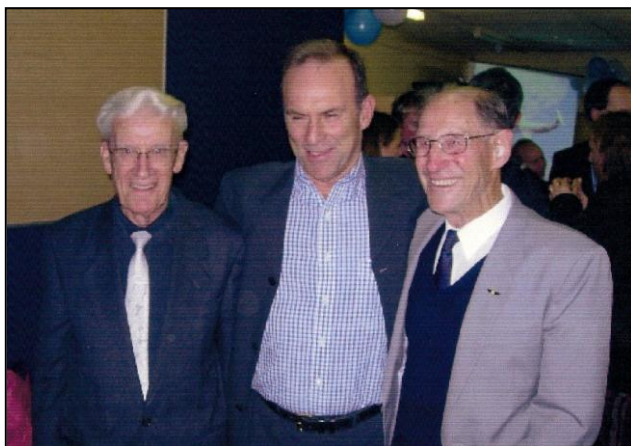
Jack owned a big camp in the Adirondack Mountains in northern New York State and we have stayed there. It was a big place bought for the use of young people and filled with 'A line' cottages (beautifully built 'chicken' houses) made of cedar. The property is on an island in a lake (there are 3000 lakes in the region) and was previously owned by two old spinsters. You could only drive there in winter over the ice. The old ladies had a car out on the island and as there were only a few kilometres of road to drive on the car only had 35 miles 'on the clock.' Murray was with Jack when he bought the camp.

George Curle was the best man at our wedding as mentioned earlier. He came down to Wellington for our Ruby wedding anniversary, which Lois hosted at our home. George was full of fun. He made a speech and told everyone about Murray being sick the day we were married and said, "If Murray hadn't recovered, I could have married her myself". We were always good friends with George Curle. He was an excellent Bible Teacher and was so clear in his teaching, sometimes with very funny illustrations.

We still have many friends around Auckland. Whenever we have gone to the Baptist Tabernacle in Auckland a little huddle of people who remembered us would gather around. Bruce Patrick has often asked Murray to stand up and has then introduced him to the people at the service.

MAF friends

There was an article about us in the English MAF magazine and as a result we received letters from some very old friends. Our granddaughter Penny had written telling them of Murrays ninetieth birthday. We went up to Auckland to the MAF sixtieth Celebration.



Murray with Jim Hickey (the 'weather man') and Trevor Strong.

Murray's Family

Murray had five brothers and sisters who all lived in New Zealand.

- Nancy, the eldest died in the Mount Erebus tragedy in 1979
- Roy died at the age of 67
- Philip died in 2010 in hospital in Rotorua at the age of 95
- Murray is 94 (July 2011)
- Muriel is 92 and in hospital following several strokes
- Lois was a younger sister died at 18 months old.

Muriel has five sons who are very good to their mother.

One of Muriel's sons, Ray Williams, races a Porsche and is a really nice man. He is well known as one of the fastest saloon car racers in NZ and has a table full of trophies at his home. He has taken a few people, including a young man with cancer, for a ride in his car.

On one occasion he left his Porsche parked at Bushey Way as he did not like leave it at his motel. All the kids in the street were excited about that. Ray gave Ben, our grandson, and some of the youngsters a ride up the road in the car.

Minnie's Family

Minnie's family all continued to live in Newcastle, England except for Edie who lived in Surrey. Minnie had five brothers and sisters.

- John, the eldest died July 1993 at the age of 77
- Edie died on 16 Jan 2010 at the age of 90
- Irvine died on 11 June 1984
- Minnie is 89 (July 2011)
- Rose died 7 Jan 2009 at the age of 85
- Jim was the youngest. He died 18 July 2001 at the age of 74.

On Minnie's last visit to England, she was photographed with one of her brothers, John, and her sisters Rose and Edie.



Maungaraki Baptist Church – 25 years ‘plus’

This chapter includes a few photos and memories from their friends at the Maungaraki Baptist Church.



Murray and Minnie were foundation members when the Church was begun in 1986 and continued as members over the next 25 years.



The Church held a celebration of the first 25 years in March 2011, Murray is seen in the photo above cutting the cake.

Murray and Minnie have visited church members when they have been unwell or in hospital, have been involved in prayer meetings, Alpha courses, home groups and the discipleship of new Christians. Murray served as an Elder, led worship and the youth group, preached at the Church and encouraged support for missionaries. Minnie's baking has been enjoyed at many Church functions.

Their loyalty and commitment is an inspiration to their many friends.



The above photo was taken in the Community Centre where the Church met for the first eighteen years. Murray and Minnie are on the second row.

In 1995 the first of two buildings were relocated onto the land and then in 2002 a second relocated building became the Auditorium. This building was originally built originally built in 1929 as the social hall for the Woburn Railway Workshops.

Murray and Minnie were both very involved in the restoration work of these buildings.



Murray and Jim (Left) on the day the three pieces of old building arrived on the Church land.

Murray and Minnie helping with the Church restorations. (Below)



Murray the 'inventor' was a great help in solving the many challenges of renovating an old building. Murray was always 'fixing' things and keen to 'have a go' at something new like the controls of this small excavator.



The top photo is the Administration building. The photo in the middle is of the Auditorium building when it first arrived in Maungaraki and the bottom photo of when the work was finished.





We all loved it when Murray and Minnie would sing together along with the banjo just as they had done so many times in their lives.



This photo shows Minnie talking to one of the young ones at the Discovery Club.



Murray and Minnie are chatting with Judith on Jim's 60th birthday in 1993.



During the Church restorations Murray was frequently to be found up a ladder or on the three metre high scaffold along with John Hazael. John is with his wife Angela in the photos above.



Murray and Minnie have been a part of the Church 'over 50's group since it began several years ago and in the early days we often met at their home.

The photo of Murray with John Miller's motorbike was taken on Murray's 94th birthday. He was still driving a car at that time.



This photo with the Cross, Rainbow and the Window that Murray lovingly restored illustrates what Murray and Minnie have put into the work of the Maungaraki Baptist Church over 25 years....
Faith, Hope and Love.

