

# LIVES WORTH LIVING

*Br David Noel Merrick MSC*



DARAMALAN COLLEGE



Downlands  
College



Chevalier  
College



# 1

## We Came With the Second Fleet

It was suggested to me by some past-students of Chevalier College, Bowral, that I should write my memoirs of my time at the college, for I lived and worked there for almost 30 years. I decided to go further than that and include something of my family history and something of my ministry in other MSC locations.

The first Merrick to come to Australia was Edward Merrick who was born in Kent, England, in the 1760s. In 1787 he was arrested and convicted for stealing sugar, flour and tea to the value of two pounds ten shillings. At the Old Bailey Judge Ashurst sentenced him to transportation to Australia for seven years.

For two years he served on the supply ships in Portsmouth Harbour and then became a passenger on the *Surprize* which sailed from Portsmouth on January 19, 1790. Two other ships, *Neptune* and *Scarborough* left on the same day. Another two convict ships, *Lady Juliana* and *Guardian*, as well as a store-ship *Justinian* had left earlier and are part of the famous Second Fleet.

There were about 1020 people on these ships, but only 759 arrived six months later in Sydney Harbour. The convicts were regularly shackled with leg irons and were often up to their waist in water. They suffered from scurvy, malnutrition and other diseases, and many died on the way. The captain of the *Scarborough* was held responsible for the greatest number lost, for he withheld food supplies from the convicts in order to set up shop in Sydney.

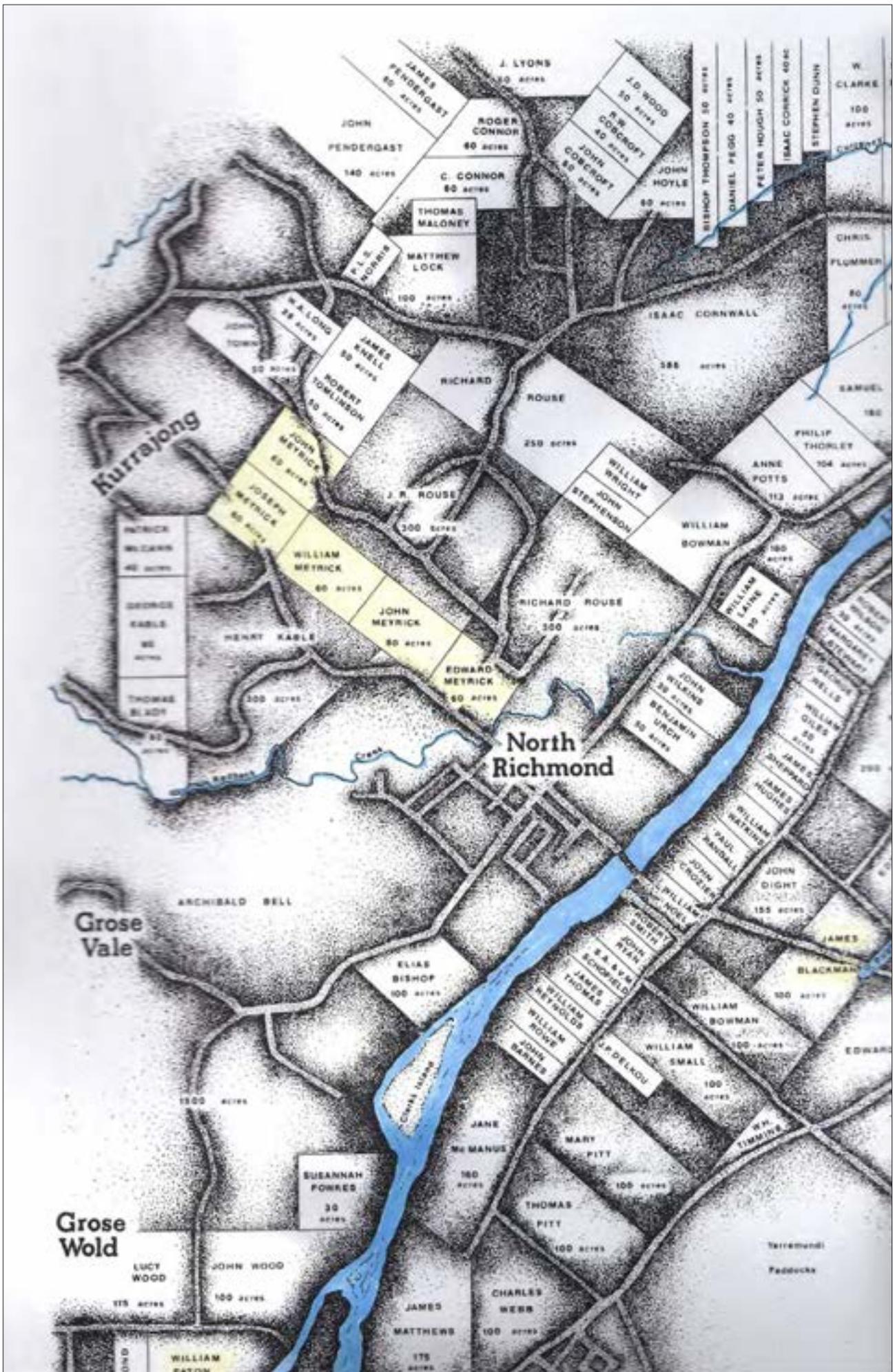
The *Surprize* arrived in Sydney Harbour on June 26, 1790. Edward Merrick was sent to Richmond, fifteen miles north-west of Sydney. He later became a blacksmith and constable. He was eventually granted 30 acres of land on Richmond Hill, where he grew vegetables for

Governor Bligh. Edward sustained a broken arm while arresting a 17 year-old boy for stealing a horse and being a highwayman. The boy was sentenced to hang. Another thief stole two of Edward's shirts and a pair of trousers. He received 50 lashes. Edward was grateful that he was not receiving the lashes!

Edward's wife-to-be, Mary Elizabeth Russell, also from Kent, was sentenced in the Old Bailey for stealing a hank of silk in December 1789 and received a seven year sentence of transportation. She arrived in Sydney on the *Mary Anne* that left England on February 16, 1791 and arrived in Sydney on July 9, 1791. How she met Edward is not known, but they were married December 24, 1791 at St. Phillips Church, Sydney. They had five children: John, William, Joseph and Thomas (twins) and Elizabeth who married Robert Martin. Each of the boys received 30 acres of land on Richmond Hill, north of the Hawkesbury River.

Four members of the family are buried at North Richmond cemetery: Edward, Mary, Elizabeth and Robert Martin. Next to them is the Martin family grave. Names are all inscribed on the lids of the concrete or sandstone tombs. The graves are situated in two rows nearest the Hawkesbury River. When my nephew Stephen and I were looking for the graves, Stephen was further over than myself; suddenly I came across them. I shouted out 'Stephen, I've found them'. I told him 'they must have been speaking to me'.

Our original name was Meyrick but it was changed to Merrick some time after Edward's arrival in New South Wales.



*Land grants to the Meyrick family*

# 2

## The Next Generations

Edwards' son, William, married Henrietta Blackman in 1823. Henrietta was the sister of John Blackman of Hartley Vale on Lockyer's Line of Road, south of Lithgow's Gap Road. John came to Australia with his parents on board the *Canada* in 1802.

John's father, James, became famous as an explorer. With William Lawson he explored Bathurst, Orange and further west. John Blackman is associated with Hartley Vale where he built a two storey sandstone house for a cost of 1200 pounds; it became part of Merrick history.

William Merrick and Henrietta Blackman had twelve children: Mary Anne, Edward, Robert, Henrietta, Elizabeth, Joseph, Susannah, Caroline, James, Robert, Richard and Thomas. Joseph married Mary Jane Wood. Mary Ann married William Morris. Robert married Matilda Blackman. Henrietta married James Peacock, a nephew of John Blackman and Henrietta Peacock.

These girls were my dad's sisters - Ada, Alice, Henrietta, Leila, Essy and Eva Bell (Tibbie) and Lizzie Peacock and Sophie her daughter.

Only two of the 'girls', as Dad called them, ever married. Dad's sisters were given the inn *Australian Arms* in 1900 for their home.

Opposite our little home, John Blackman built the second Cobb & Co Inn in 1854. It was called the *Australian Arms* but is now called *Fern Hill*, and is owned by my cousin Robert Merrick and his wife Shirley.

The *Australian Arms* was used by Cobb & Co as a staging place on the Lockyer Line of Road, which ran through Kurrajong and Bilpin to the present township of Bell; then down the escarpment into Hartley Valley below Mt York, to the first Cobb & Co Inn called *Collets Inn* which is still there. Then it passes through my people's and the



The Merrick family tree

Peacock's lands to the Great Western Highway and into Lithgow via the famous Forty Bends.

A new road has been built round the southern edge of Hassans Walls on the western side, coming out at the Junction Road to Jenolan Caves near Bowenfels.

Ada the eldest of William Merrick's children married Walter Riddell and Essy married Keith Brown from Cooma. Their son Edward was born in 1925. Ada and Walter had three girls, Hilda, Rita and Nellie. Hilda married Keith Rosewarne and they had one son Keith and a daughter Mona. Alice, Henrietta and Leila had a flower and dressmaking shop in Lithgow, six miles away.

These were early days and there was no car, so they walked up over Hassans Walls to Lithgow. Tibbie (Eva Bell) milked the cows and looked after the sheep and animals, and eventually became a Mini-Minor car driver. In 1929 they had a Chevrolet car. Keith and Essy Brown in Cooma at *Bobinderra* sheep station had a Vauxhall Tourer till the 60's.

Uncle Thomas had two sons George and Harold, and owned a sawmill and orchard. Thomas married Sadie Langlands. Richard was an orchardist, gold-finder and water diviner. They had two daughters Eileen and Daphne, and two sons Richard and Edward, who became Salvation Army people in New Guinea. James married Mamie Bull. They had three children, Colin, Rex and Ethel. They were orchardists at South Bowenfels, as were five families of Merricks. We all lived about half

a mile from the top of Riverlette Hill and three miles from Hartley Village and St Bernard's Church and the famous court house at Hartley. Jenolan Caves Road was about half a mile away.

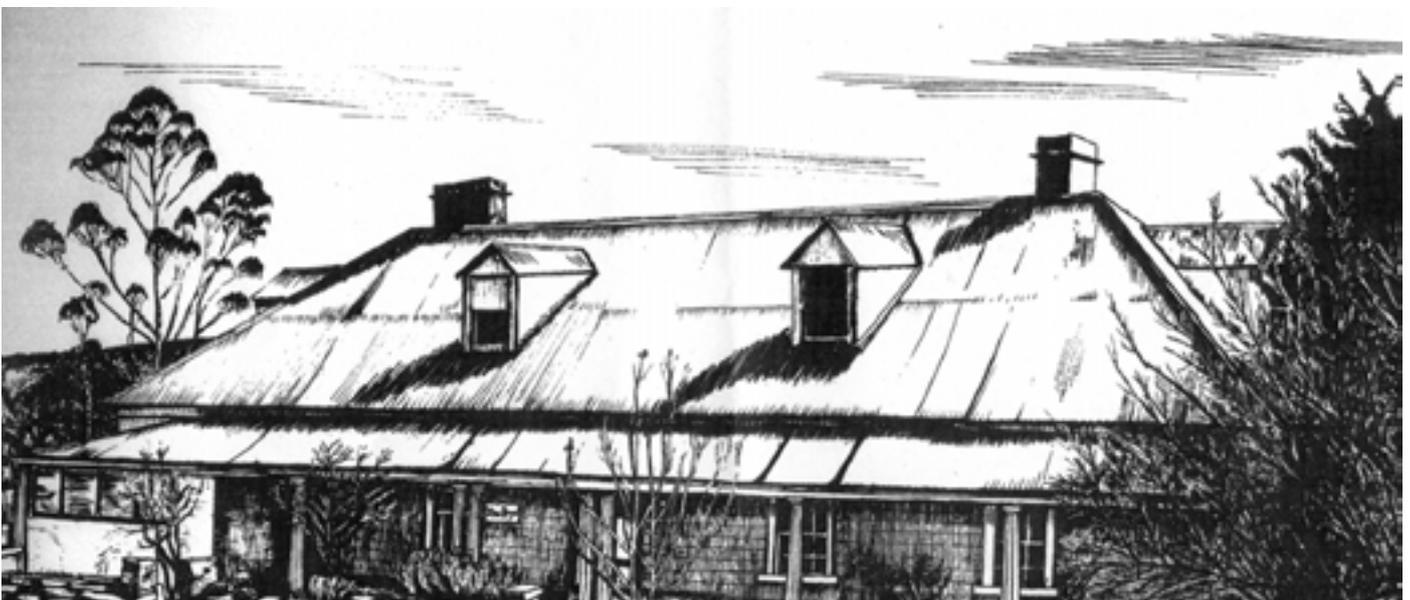
Henrietta married Edward James Patterson and later Robert Scott. Elizabeth married George Taylor. Edward married Elizabeth McKenzie, Susannah married John Bayliss, Mary Anne married William Morris, Caroline married William Price, Henrietta married Robert Scott. Elizabeth married George Taylor Roper.

William Merrick and Henrietta Blackman are buried near the Gap into Lithgow Hartley Vale. The children of Richard Merrick and Elizabeth Peacock were as follows: Mary Anne, Robert Harley, Henrietta, William, Maria, Anna Victoria, Margaret, Arthur, Susannah.

My grandfather's property consisted of 1000 acres along the Lockyer Line of Road. After Richard's death, the property was divided amongst the Merrick's six boys and the Peacock's boys. My dad had 270 acres and Thomas, James and Richard had the remaining blocks.

Dad's youngest brother Albert (known as Albert or Abb) was born in the early 1880s and married Rachel Star. They had thirteen children. One, Max, is still alive. He was born in 1925. Albert was a policeman who moved to Marrickville in Sydney, and then worked as a barber for many years. He was a very experienced bike rider, and had the fastest time from Bathurst to Sydney in 1905.

*Fernhill Cottage*



# 3

## My Family



*My father William (above) and my mother Ellen and Pat (below)*

My dad, William John, was the eldest boy born in 1867. Ada Riddell was the oldest girl, born in 1866. Dad died in 1937 of cancer to his face. A more wonderful father you could never meet. William John married Ellen Mary Hughes in May 1913 at St Bernard's Church in Hartley just opposite the Hartley Court House. My mother Ellen Mary Hughes even bought the suit for him to be married in.

The church is still being used for occasional Masses. Nellie converted him to Catholicism before

marrying him, but of seven girls and six boys in Dad's family, only William John became a Catholic and a wonderful one according to our Parish Priest then. William was also a stockman and Ellen a cook at *Kanimbla* Station in the Megalong Valley.

My mother was a great cook and a wonderful caring mother – five feet two inches tall. She was a real Australian battler - never in hospital as she was wonderfully healthy.

She came from a family on the Fish River, near Oberon. She had only two years of education, yet she could read and write, no trouble at all. They lived in a four-bedroom cottage called *Sunny Side* on the Great Western Highway, six miles south of Lithgow.

William was also a bullock driver and horse man, timber getter, race horse trainer and drove a T-model Ford and a 1927 Chevrolet truck. He was also involved in repairing and making roads – the Wombeyan Caves Road and roads north and northeast of Lithgow.

He put a four speed gear box into the three speed Chevrolet and built it into a tip truck by means of hinges

and A frame and winch. He had his bellows and anvils and hammers, saws, files and crosscut saws and axes. He was wonderful with his hands, whittling, carving etc., and doing boot repairs.

Living on the property at the same time as my parents were the famous O'Reilly brothers, Michael and Bernard, who in 1937 found the crashed Stinson plane in the Green Mountains above the Gold Coast.

I am one of twins, born to William John Merrick and Ellen Mary Hughes in 1926 at Lithgow Hospital. Patrick and I were pretty identical from the start, though at birth Patrick, the first-born, weighed three and a half pounds, and I weighed three pounds. They often called us Pat and Mick. One cousin Ted Brown observed once 'there is poor little Pat and Mick confined to a tea chest all day long'. I'm sure it wasn't all day long as we used to sing one another to sleep in our double bed. We had gingery hair and freckles galore. Mum could tell us apart, but my uncles and aunties weren't sure. Pat parted his hair on the right and I on the left.

Mum was strict but very loving and kind – 'my two little boys', she called us. She was a wonderful Catholic – loved the Mass, Rosary and prayers. We went to Mass at Hartley once a month as Dad was working on the roads six days a week and Lithgow was six miles away. Father Timothy O'Farrell baptised us and Archbishop Michael Kelly confirmed us in 1937.

When we were small we had a double pram, but alas, one day Lionel who was our day carer, tipped us out, with Dad's lunch aboard, over in the bush. Pat was breastfed and I was bottle fed. It had to be the exact bottle, otherwise I complained bitterly. They all called me 'Tiny' as I was



the smaller. Apparently one day Aunty Jane said to the dog, “outside Tiny”, and I burst into tears because I thought it was myself in trouble!

We grew up during the Depression, so most things were pretty grim with regards to clothing and food and enjoyment. Mainly we ate rabbits and mushrooms, eggs and vegetables grown by Dad. We took treacle and dripping sandwiches to school occasionally. There was always plenty of fruit in all the orchards where we were welcome to help ourselves.

The basic wage in those days after the First World War was three pounds, twelve shillings and sixpence. Possibly it would be the equivalent to \$80 - \$90 a week now. So we were Aussie battlers for sure. Dad’s Chevrolet 1927 truck cost 112 pounds.



*Shirley and Pat*

I can very  
p l a i n l y  
r e m e m b e r  
Dad taking Pat  
and me down  
to the toy shop  
in Lithgow  
and buying a  
three wheel  
trike for each  
of us. Did we

have fun! Most times till we ran into one another, then got off and had a fight! Who won? Who cares?

Later on Dad built four-wheel scooters, or box carts as they were called. Ours were quite different – green timber shafts and wooden cross plates for steering and footrests and two seats, covered by hessian.

Dad cut out wooden wheels from green timber; he used steel tube axles and king pins drilled into the axles to hold the wheels on. The steering gear was string or rope; steering wheels would have been too dangerous down the side of the Mt Hassan Walls, where we cleared our tracks. The wheels were great; they never broke up like steel or pram wheels.

In the snow we built stirrups out of timber and pieces of bike tyres nailed on. We had a ball, even being handed down rubber boots and clothes of all kinds, even knickerbockers (not for long). I can still remember my first brown long pants in 1937.

We walked to the Bowenfels School five days a week except when it was raining or snowing, or when there were bushfires. It was a distance of three and a half miles each way to the public school where there were about of 22 pupils. Our teachers from 1933 to 1939 were firstly Mr Cahill and then Mr Fred Hawes. Bushfires, wild

animals, bullocks and pigs from the slaughter-house near the school frightened us.

If we were too sick to go to school we received a tablespoon of castor oil. Thank God we never had appendicitis. We had whooping cough, measles, chicken pox and mumps that were pretty prevalent in those days. Dad cut our hair and later Tibby our Aunty also cut it. I had a fight the first day at school and ended up with two black eyes. Mum said ‘serves you right’. Rex Bryant was the culprit. He used to ride into school six miles away from Marsden Swamp on the road to Jenolan Caves, twenty-two miles away. We became great friends.

Dad built Pat and me billy carts and all kinds of wonderful things – boomerangs, kites, little wooden men, cricket bats, etc. He put new leather and rubber heels on our boots. We helped him winding the grind store and pumping the bellows for all his many inventions and tasks of sharpening cross cut saws and tools. He had a great stockwhip (never once used) but mother had a little round plaited riding whip.

In the Depression we survived on rabbits and mushrooms and Mum’s inventive cooking – baked dinners and puddings, scones, cakes, etc. We had no running water, only tanks, and no electricity or ice boxes, only Coolgardie safes and outdoor toilets and one 1927 Chevrolet truck. It was pretty primitive but a wonderful family scene.

There were very few cars in those days, the best being a Chrysler Royal owned by a Jewish man who kindly gave us a lift. There were also trucks from the coal mine a mile from home near Uncle Tom’s place. He looked after the pit ponies. We sometimes got a ride, only on level ground, in a solid rubber tyred Thorneycroft with no manual gear box; there was steam and smoke issuing everywhere and it was so high up to jump into. We also saw steam trucks and belt driven cars and Baby Austin cars. We also got a ride in a racing car, going to Bathurst races at Mt Panorama or somewhere. On one occasion an Irishman picked us up and said ‘I’ll bet you two are twins and Irish’. Agreeing partly he said to us ‘Ireland was Old Ireland when England was a pup, but Ireland will be Island when England is buggered up’.

After finishing our primary school at Bowenfels in 1939, Pat and I went to St Joseph’s College Hunters Hill 1940-41 and then to Marist Juniorate School at Mittagong 1942-43. We both gained our Intermediate Certificate there. We played every sport imaginable – league, union, hockey, Aussie Rules, soccer, hand ball, cricket etc. My Dad was a foot runner and Pat and I both won 400, 200 and 100 yard races. We loved sport.

# 4

## My Brothers

My full name is David Noel Merrick and my twin brother is Patrick Ian Malcolm Merrick. We were born on November 18, 1926 in Lithgow Hospital. We were apparently named after the two doctors who delivered us: Ian Malcolm and David Bamber.



Bede

We had three older brothers: Bede William who was born at Kanimbla Station in 1915; Denis John who was born in 1919 at Hartley in an old mud brick house which still survives near the church; and Lionel Richard who was born in 1921 at *Sunny Side* and Lithgow Hospital.

Bede became a car salesman and was also a salesman of electrical irons and Aladdin's lamps. He later drove a big red truck for cousin Joe Reynolds and Muriel Hughes' family, and for mum's brother David and Jane Flanagan from the Cox's River. Joe was crushed twice by rolling logs at Mt Wilson; Bede rescued him.

Bede married Betty White from Blacktown in November 1939. He joined the Sixth Division in July 1940 and sailed for Libya. The Sixth Division was later to become famously known as the Rats of Tobruk. He later fought in Greece. He maintained he knocked out seven Germans in a bunker with a hand grenade.

After the war he went to night classes and gained his Intermediate Certificate, because at 13 he refused to go to high school and Dad said to him: "Well Bede, it is for you to be on the opposite end of a cross cut saw". Later Bede became the Manager of Masonite in Sydney and Melbourne and played pennant golf for Oakley Club in Sydney, eventually getting down to a handicap of eight. Then he became skipper of the voluntary Coastal Patrol in Sydney. He owned the old *Sabe*, of the Neutral Bay Fleet. Later on he had a smaller boat.

He was also charged with looking after Petrov the Russian spy out at sea, with a Bren gun. He died at Mt Victoria in 1988 of a heart attack.

Way back in the 1930s Bede and Bill Donoghue and their mates built a six hole sand green golf course on the *Fern Hill* property which had 146 acres, coach house of limestone bricks and a horse stable. It is presently the family home of my cousin Robert Merrick and his wife Shirley, although it had been in the hands of the National Trust for thirty years, following the failure of some of the Merrick girls' family to make a will. Robert is the son of Stanley Cool, uncle Albert's family. His younger brother is Noel Paul Merrick.

Noel and his wife Margaret used to live at Winnmalee where their former house was burnt down in the October 2013 bushfires. Fortunately they sold their wonderful two storey wooden home just before the bushfires and shifted to Gerringong, halfway through 2013. 220 homes were burnt out in Mt Victoria, Lithgow, Bell, Mt Wilson, Faulconbridge and Mt Tomah, and in Bilpin and Bargo on the southern line.



Jack

Denis John Merrick (Jack or sometimes known as Johnny Hughes at the Speedway), was born in 1919 at Hartley. Jack, Bede, Lionel, Pat and I all went to the South Bowenfels Public School near Lithgow for six years as did our cousins; it involved three and a half miles of up hill and down dale walking. Jack and Lionel both went to Lithgow Technical School. Jack wanted to be a draftsman. He actually built a wooden frame and canvas Tiger Moth aeroplane and model planes as well. After that he and Lionel joined the Small Arms Factory

in Lithgow and during the war assembled FN rifles and Bren guns. The Small Arms Factory and smaller feeder factories at Portland and places further west employed 12, 000 people.

Jack married Marion Berry, and drove a taxi for a few years. They have a son Alan, who also worked at the factory as a grease maintenance man. He now lives at my old home *Sunny Side* opposite *Fern Hill*. He is very unwell with cancer as I write.

Jack and Lionel both went to Sydney after the war. Jack raced push-bikes, and dirt track motorbikes and later midget cars - a BRM midget No 43 at Sydney Show Ground. He had a few bad accidents - a broken leg and foot and the loss of two fingers on his right hand on the bikes, and suffered concussion in the racing cars, when a car turned over.

After he reached the Veteran Division in the racing cars, he bought a 1937 Austin with a supercharged engine and raced in Veteran Reliability Races with very great success.

He was the oldest New South Wales driver at Amaroo Park and Oran Park in 1976. He belonged to the Lithgow Car Club and always spoke very highly of it. I have a few of his trophies.

Later Jack ran a metal milling factory at Bankstown. He married Hilda Moore in the 1960s; her son Ken also raced cars at Amaroo. Another stepson Robert and wife Anne always supported Jack, as did daughter Caroline and husband Michael Walden.

Jack returned to Lithgow and *Sunny Side* after mum died in 1968. Jack rebuilt a 1924 six cylinder Sunbeam car at home. Jack died in Lithgow in 1996.

Lionel Merrick was born in 1921 in Lithgow Hospital.

*Jim and his wife*



He took Pat and me to school in our first year, 1933. Lionel worked on the dairy farm of mum's niece, Nellie O'Donnell and her husband, Jim's property at *Good Luck Hollow* at Littleton, Lithgow, and later at fruit orchards of the Birds Family at Hartley Vale.

He had a few bad accidents on push-bikes. Later he worked at the Small Arms Factory but was called up to the army. He served in Borneo and was involved in the battle of Balikpapan.

After the war Lionel married Phyllis Brown and lived at Punchbowl. He worked in the Recovery Section of the Taxation Department for twenty-two years.

They have a son Steven and daughter Anne. Phyllis followed Lionel into Taxation for some years and then worked in a supermarket at Yagoona where Anne and husband Peter Ford and son Luke live. They are keen on golf and tennis, while Luke plays baseball. Lionel loved English cars such as the Morris, Hillman and Wolseley. He and Phyllis loved tennis, cricket, golf and the speedway.

Lionel died of cancer of the brain in December 1978 aged 57, and is buried at Rookwood Cemetery as is his wife Phyllis, who died in 2001.

Steven, Lionel and Phyllis' son now live at Richmond, (he was formerly at Windsor). He married Louise and had a son Joshua and a daughter Lauren. Later he married Lani and they have a daughter Emma Lynne. Lani is a lift operator. They have a wonderful new home on Castlereagh Road, North Richmond. Steven works as a fitter and turner for Hare and Forbes in Parramatta. He loves bikes, cars and welding, and is restoring an early Honda sports car. They love to travel to New Zealand, Fiji and other Pacific islands. I stay with them often and they visit me here in Canberra at Daramalan College, where I have been for twenty-six years, as a Brother in a Missionary order of Priests and Brothers.

Pat began work at the Lithgow Railways in 1944 and was there for twenty-two years, later on working as a shunter. In the early 1950s he married Shirley Thompson who was originally from Mudgee, and later of Mt Victoria. All the Thompson family, both boys and girls, worked for the railways and Frank the father was an engine driver for the Premier of New South Wales.

Pat and Shirley reared two great boys, James Patrick and Glenn William. Jim is foreman of works at Pt Piper and Wallerawang Power House.

Glenn is a car detailer, kitchen hand, musician, steel guitar and aeroplane modeller and flyer. Glenn taught me quite a bit about flying and I made and flew model airplanes here in Canberra.

# 5

## Secondary Education and Religious Profession

My twin brother and I went to school in Sydney in 1940 at St Joseph's College, Hunters Hill, run by the Marist Brothers. We loved the college and the Brothers. There were only 312 students in our first year and slightly more in the second year. At this time Australia was at war and Sydney was being invaded by Japanese submarines.

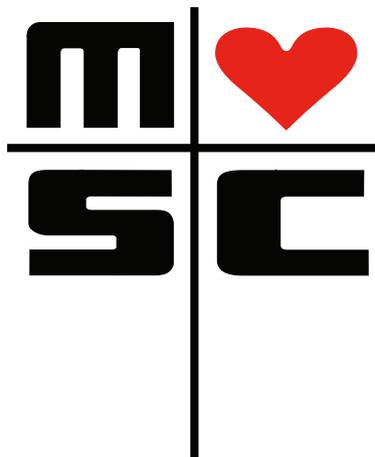
St Joseph's College football and cricket teams won the GPS in both 1940 and 1941. Our own Fr Tyson Doneley MSC (4th Rector Chevalier) was captain of the cricket and 5/8 in the football team in 1938-39.

Pat and I went to the Marist Brothers Juniorate at the behest of the Brothers for two years, 1942-1943. We loved it there also. We studied hard and secured our Intermediate Certificates. We both loved sport playing rugby, swimming and athletics. I won a 440 there in 1942. My dad was a foot runner of note at Lithgow and was known as the 'Bowenfels Greyhound'.

We played every sport available – rugby league, rugby union, Aussie Rules, soccer, hockey with bush sticks, handball, athletics and helped in the vegetable and flower gardens. We also had many different cooking tasks.

Eventually Pat wanted to leave and they wanted me to go as well, not wanting to separate us. I was sorry to leave as I still thought I had a vocation to be a Brother.

My Parish Priest at Lithgow, Fr P J Whelan, suggested I go to Douglas Park, as the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart had more Brothers in Australia than the Jesuits,



Franciscans or Columbans. Fr Tom Drake was actually giving a mission at Lithgow at that very time. So my mother and I went to see him at the MSC holiday house at Leura in the Blue Mountains. The oldest of the MSC Brothers, Brother Robert South was there with him. Within six weeks I headed for St Marys Towers, Douglas Park, our training house for students and postulants and novices. I arrived there by train from Lithgow and Sydney; at Douglas Park a charcoal-driven car took us across the Nepean River. I was sweet 17 years.

My postulancy lasted nearly a full year, with Brothers Dave Smith and Michael Puls (Vult Vengeance pilot from the Pacific War). There were seven students for the priesthood. We started our novitiate in 1945 with Brothers Dennis Murphy, John Murphy, Albert Yelds, Kingston Summerhayes, Kevin White and Bernie McGrane and one other who left. Father Cuthbert Hoy was my fondly remembered Novice Master and Fr Askew and Fr McCormack our Bursars.

On 26th February 1946 we took our first vows of poverty, chastity and obedience for three years. It was a most memorable day. Then, after six years, we took vows for life. Training for the priesthood was then at Croydon Monastery in Melbourne. Most of the students eventually became Priests except me. I loved being a Brother and still do. I have had a wonderful time as an MSC Brother with great graces and fond memories and a life of 67 years in the MSC schools amongst wonderful teachers, staff and grateful students.

# 6

## St Mary's Towers

Firstly, a brief history of St Mary's Towers, Douglas Park, our training ground and once an Apostolic School.

Fr Treand bought it for the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart in 1904.

The 1700 acres is situated above the Nepean River at Douglas Park and between there and Appin and Wilton townships. It was built

in 1842-43 for Major Mitchell, Surveyor-General NSW and famous explorer; it is made of sandstone walls with a slate tiled roof and a spiral staircase and turrets. It has two storeys and a horse stable also made of sandstone.

My great grandfather William Merrick and 15-year-old son Harley were summoned from Bathurst to help build the house. They lived at Bathurst where William worked as a policeman and builder. Of necessity everyone was a builder of some repute in the early days of Australia.

He was foreman of works in 1842-43 as was one of Br George Cusack's grandfathers. George also came to Chevalier in the 1950s.



The Missionaries of the Sacred Heart (MSC) are established in 55 countries. We were founded by Fr Jules Chevalier in Issoudun, France in 1854. He is also the Founder of the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart.

The Australian MSC have missions in Northern Territory, Papua New Guinea, Japan and Vietnam. We are Priests and Brothers.

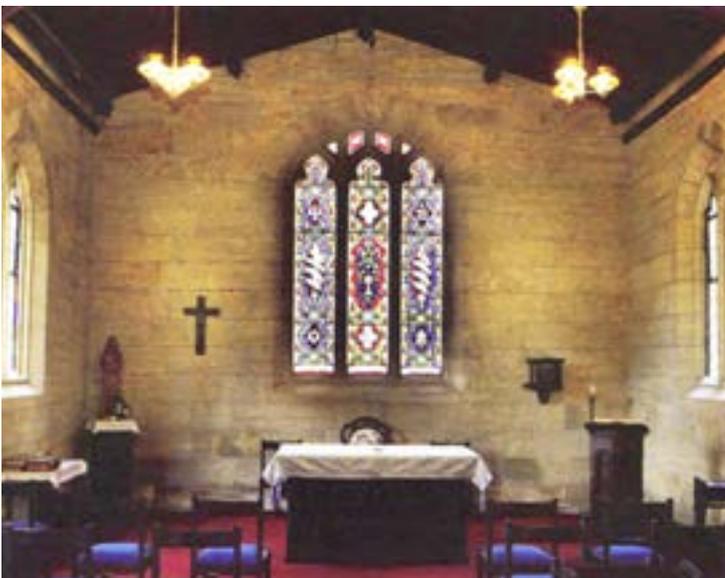
Our main works apart from missions are parishes, schools, and many individual ministries.

We have four secondary colleges in Australia – Downlands College in Toowoomba, Chevalier College in Bowral, Daramalan College in Dickson, Canberra and Monivae College in Hamilton, Victoria. All of these schools are now coeducational.



Darwin's previous three Bishops were MSCs. We have parishes in Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Canberra, Hobart and Launceston. Priests and Brothers act as teachers and social workers for the poor and afflicted; all kinds of missionary endeavours.

Brother Mick Puls stayed at Douglas Park in charge of the laundry. Brother Dave Smith was a foundation member of staff at Chevalier College in February 1946.



# 7

## Riversdale

Before ownership by the MSCs in 1946, the earlier owners of Riversdale were as follows: Harry Osbourne bought Sadlier's grant (soldier grant) in 1879. He was educated at The Kings School Parramatta. Riversdale House was fashioned on a Swiss chalet by architect John Hart, who also designed the Grange at Mt Victoria. Mrs Osbourne was Charlotte Scott, hence Charlotte Street.

The next owners were Mr and Mrs Billyard; they came from Elizabeth Bay, hence Elizabeth Street is named after her. They added the ballroom (now the Chapel) and the Steinbeck grand piano. They left in 1892 and built a home in England, which was used for a hospital during the First World War.

Riversdale was then bought by Mrs Godsen, wife of Roger Godsen, a barrister, who also acquired Coates grant. Next came James Laing Campbell, a judge of the Supreme Court, NSW. In 1914 it was purchased by F W Donkin in the township of Burradoo. He died in July, 1914, and his wife Mrs Alice Donkin became the chatelaine of Riversdale for 25 years till 1939 when she died. Her son Darcy Donkin lived there 1914-1945.

The house and property of 146 acres was sold to the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart. Cardinal Gilroy and Monsignor Giles were responsible for persuading the MSCs to open a school there in 1946. It was named Chevalier College in honour of our Founder.

The early settlers in this area were given a cow, rations for a year, a shovel, a spade, a hoe, two axes, two picks, two mattocks, a wheelbarrow, a hammer and 10,000 nails and built their own small dwelling from

stringy bark and bush timber. An adze was used for levelling the branches and a grindstone to sharpen the axes and tools.

In the history of Chevalier College there has been seven gardeners who looked after beautiful gardens which contained roses, camellias, rhododendrons, gladioli, tulips, and a cork tree (still going).

One was a Dutchman – Tony Bregonje, who was actually a chef by trade. He planted 1500 tulips and we won a few garden trophies in the famous Bowral Tulip Festival. There were beautiful Canadian spruces and other fir trees.

Along the main drive off Moss Vale Road were elm trees and on the back drive fir trees. Off the old South Road from Sydney near the back gate was the Riversdale lodge – Charley Carr's family lived there.

A croquet lawn was quite a feature near the old building and the Riversdale ballroom became our first permanent Chapel.



At the turn of the century—front entrance to Old Chevalier.

# 8

## Early Years at Chevalier College

In July 1946 I was appointed to the MSC staff at Chevalier College in Bowral NSW. I had almost twenty-three years straight at Chevalier 1946-1968.

Chevalier started on 19th February 1946 with 24 boarders and 20 day boys. Fr Harry Reid (Chaplain in World War 2 and later with BCOF in Japan and BCKF in Korea), was the first Rector.

Other priests were Frs Frank Butler, John Tyler, John Northey, John Burford, Brendan Sykes, and Brothers Basil Clarke, Jim Sculley, George Souter, Greg McCann and Dave Smith.

Brother Sculley was sent to Downlands in July 1946 and I, went to join the original members on 19th July 1946.

Fr John Northey was the first Bursar and Brother Greg McCann (senior) the first cook and driver of the only car, a Chrysler Royal.

Brother Clarke was gardener and looked after the boilers etc. Brother Smith was the sacristan along with other responsibilities.

Brother Souter looked after the Priests' and Brothers' dining rooms. I was in charge of the boys' dining room and the sweeping of five classrooms, etc.

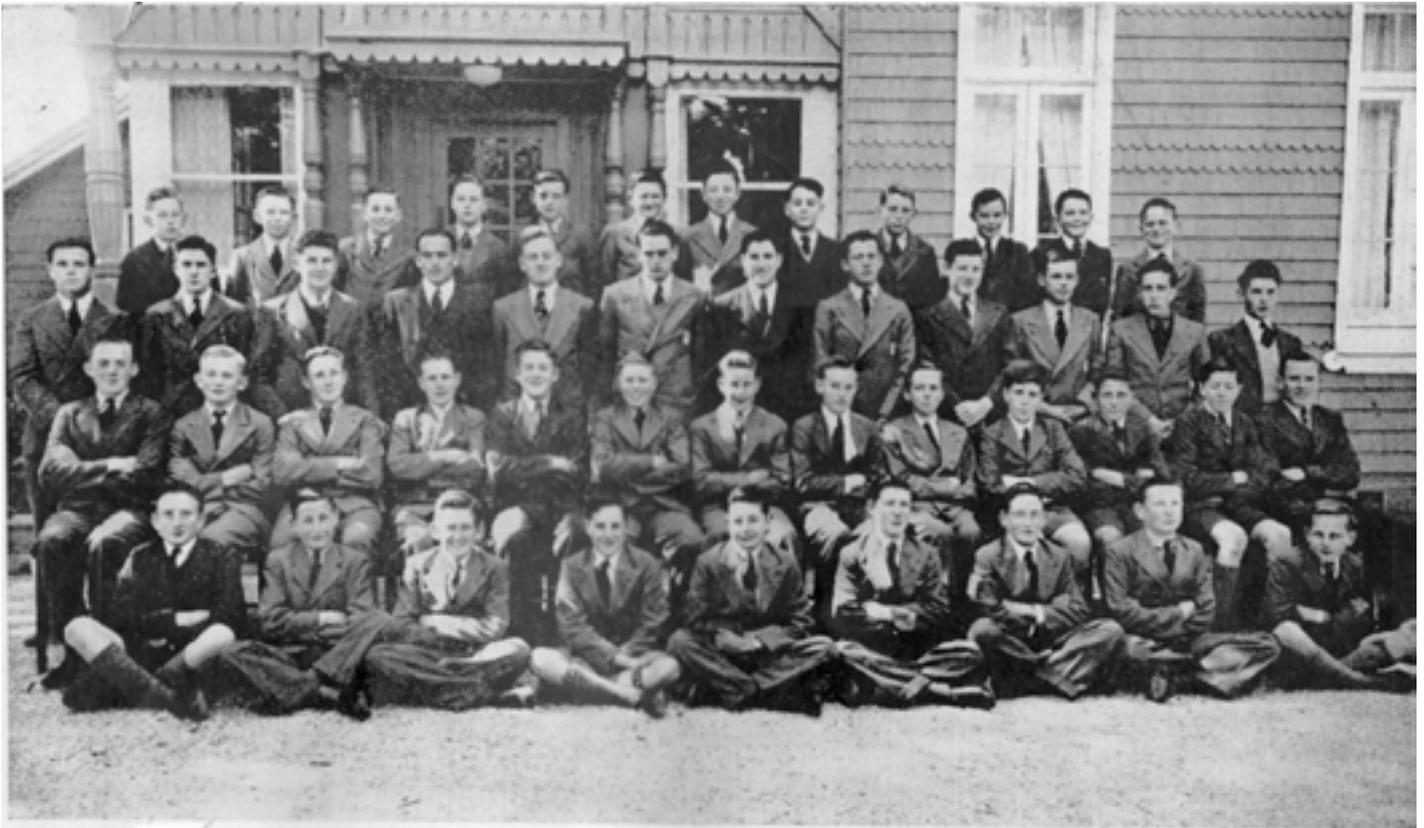
The main school buildings were made of wood and fibro. They had fibro roofs and were built to last for only thirty years. Brother John King, master builder by trade and Brothers Tom Ide and Tom Fitzgerald built a 70 yard hall and stage. A grand piano was moved down to the hall a few years after the opening. I was part of the painting team in the early 1950s.



They also built a large dining room and later on four bedrooms. I also began to do some cooking time with Brother Greg McCann and later on with Brothers Bob Lysaught, Leo Wasson, Peter Harvey Jackson and Ernie McGrath.

Ernie later on took a chef's course with Sister Rita at Mount Street, Sydney. I held the fort at Chevalier with Brothers Vin White, and then Ernie McGrath taught Vin White and myself.

A photo on the following page shows the first 46 students at Chevalier and another of the 1946 staff and the beautiful old shingle building at Chevalier.



THE COLLEGE, 1946.

Back Row: J. Shannon, A. Ryan, P. Stapleton, R. Delaney, P. Maguire, B. McRae, J. Delamont, M. Mauro, M. Gearon, D. Hunt, J. Clarke, S. Mangold,  
 Third Row: J. O'Grady, E. Rumble, P. Dalle Nogare, J. Burke, K. Hunt, J. Brennan, D. Hearne, P. Sullivan, P. Trevaskis, M. Mouldous, R. McGarrigle,  
 F. Boyle.  
 Second Row: I. Barbour, P. Tilburn, A. Mowle, G. Geach, F. Carlen, F. Phillips, R. Stalling, M. Delaney, T. Bouffier, P. Curtis, K. Brown, J. Lourry,  
 J. Krelle.  
 First Row: G. Reilly, G. Flynn, J. Barry, M. Higgins, P. Beardsley, R. Hillson, P. Gibson, P. McKenna, K. Homan.

*Above and below; Foundation staff and students 1946*

Father Bede Mooney became second Bursar at Chevalier in 1947. Fr John Joseph McMahan was the second Rector. Brother Joseph Keeley, an Irishman, came to Chevalier from Douglas Park and was chief potato peeler. "Some as big as marbles and a lot of little ones", he complained to Br McCann. Chevalier had a permanent gardener for a few years – Charlie Carr.

The Bong Bong River was a couple of kilometres south of the College. Eventually in 1946 two loam tennis courts were built and the main oval was bulldozed out by Mr Frank Cummings from Douglas Park and also two football fields later called Coates and Sadlier. A turf wicket was constructed on the main oval with Bulli soil, under the direction of Fr John Tyler. The picket fence was painted mainly by Fr John's dad. The oval is the same size as the Sydney Cricket Ground. I helped the surveyors put the pegs in. I think the year was 1947. We eventually had seven football fields.

We were very busy digging out trees and digging drains for hedges, etc. A special set of steps to the oval was designed by Fr Tyler who taught Science and Maths with Fr Gerry Kelly, who became the 4th Rector – a gentle, wonderful man. The Kelly Wing was later named in his honour.

Fr Harry Reid invited Mr Vivian McGrath of Australian and Wimbledon fame from Mudgee

to coach the students at tennis. Viv had retired by then. In his early days at 15 years of age he was in the Davis Cup squad. At 17 years he played for Australia winning the Australian Singles title and the Doubles title with Jack Crawford. He was also four times in the quarter finals at Wimbledon. Englishman Perry and American Budge beat him, but he beat them both in Australia as far as I know. He was a very accurate server and master of the double-handed backhand, which he introduced to the players Quist and Bromitch. He kindly taught the boys and girls and staff and myself to play a lot better tennis. He had a wonderful sense of humour.



THE COLLEGE STAFF

Standing: Bros. G. McCann, M.S.C., G. Souter, M.S.C., D. Smith, M.S.C., B. Clarke, M.S.C., D. Merrick, M.S.C.  
 Seated: Frs. J. Tyler, M.S.C., E. Sykes, M.S.C., F. Butler, M.S.C., Very Rev. Fr. Provincial, M.S.C., Very Rev. Dr. Reid, M.S.C. (Rector), Frs. J. Eldridge, M.S.C., J. Burford, M.S.C., J. Northey, M.S.C.

# 9

## Tours

In 1965 we had a tour to Central Australia with 47 boys, two priests Frs Bryan Strangman and Roland Kaupp, two bus drivers from Silver City Tours, Broken Hill and a Territory guide. Only trouble, I was the cook! It was a wonderful tour, extremely well organised by Fr Strangman at each main town we came across. We travelled by train to Broken Hill and then by the two buses from Broken Hill. Colin Jack was the owner/driver – a very funny man. He loved to get us singing on the road. One song he taught began with: “There is a boarding school three miles away, where we have onion stew three times a day. Oh how the boarders yell, when they hear the dinner bell three times a day”. He taught us many other songs.

We travelled over 3000 miles in a little over three weeks and slept under the stars, in sleeping bags. We had a tent but never used it. Beautiful mountains, clear blue skies, ants’ nests galore – high ones and ever-changing colours

and temperatures the further into the Centre we went. No axes were needed to keep each camp fire going, as the wood was very brittle. We managed not to be run over by the cattle and sheep trucks – road trains they are called.

We travelled to Birdsville and up through Bedourie to Mt Isa and the mines and the lake, then across to Alice Springs and Ayres Rock. We climbed Ayres Rock and had Mass up on top. Looking back down, the bus looked the size of a small car. Then we visited our mission station at Santa Teresa and eventually drove on to Cooper Pedy, William Creek, Wilpena Pound and Adelaide. We had only one puncture before Adelaide where we joined the train to Melbourne via Border Town. We were delayed there for three hours by an accident between a Melbourne train and a truck. I stayed overnight with my mother’s sister Rose at Brighton and caught the train to Bowral the next day – a great experience!

*YCS leaders 1961*



**Y.C.S. LEADERS.**

*Back row: J. Stokes, V. Shortus, D. Sullivan, J. Fahy, R. Buchan, J. Mylott.*

*Second row: P. Blatch, J. Smith, M. Ellsmore, P. Walsh, R. Snelling, A. Vereker, J. Gillett.*

*Front row: A. Johnson, P. Coogan, A. Jensen, P. Brogan, Fr. Fletcher, M. Waugh, J. Hogan, D. Sleight,*

*V. Turnbull*

# 10

## Other Personalities

The student numbers built up gradually year-by-year. Initially the students played rugby league against the local high schools at Bowral and Moss Vale. They also played cricket, tennis and athletics against other schools and our students at Douglas Park.

'Kanga' Junior McCreay won the tennis one year. He was from Kangaroo Valley, hence the name. Other champions will be seen in the photos included in this history.

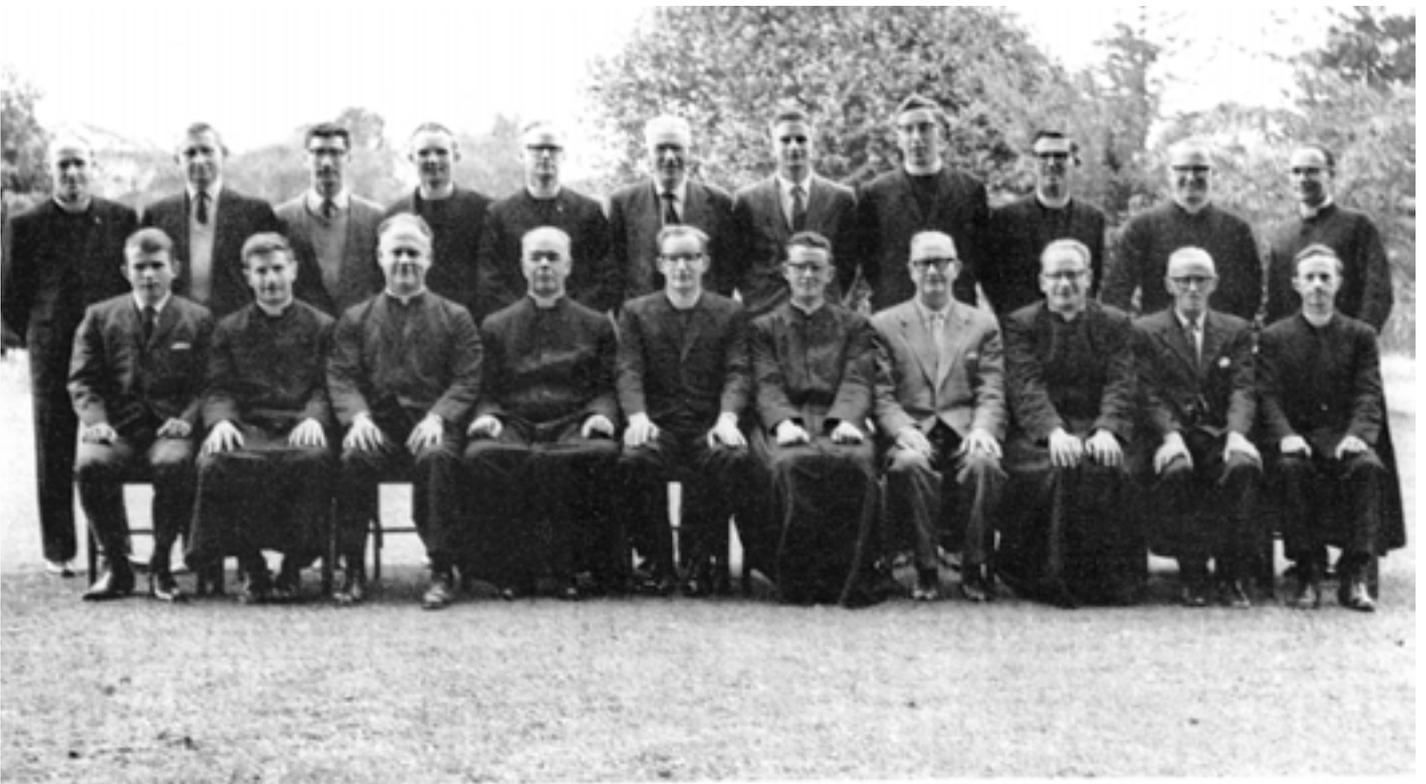
Jim Brennan from Tumut was our first Captain. His brother Paul was a student and is now one of our MSC Priests. He won a Cooper Scholarship while at Chevalier. He and Peter Manahan were our pianists for concerts

on the Steinbeck grand piano. We had a female music teacher Mrs Sherwood for many years.

Fr John Tyler guided the plays in our concerts in the early days. Quite a few of the included photos tell who was who. Fr Bob Rippin had the double dormitory – he enjoyed telling ghost stories.

Hartzler Park Convent of the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart was built in the early 1950s. Fr Terry Herbert's father and his building team built it along with the Kelly Wing, the Kerrins Wing, the first part of the library and the squash courts. In the early 50s we bought Bosco House from the Cullen family. Perhaps Fr Albert Cuneo drove them out with the College Army Band!

*Teaching staff 1966*



### TEACHING STAFF

*R. Rippin, N. Keane, R. Pertierra, H. Edmiston, P. Brennan, P. McDonnell, A. Doggett,  
R. McKenna, H. Brady, A. Bolt, B. Gagen.  
T. Power, T. Herbert, B. Strangman, J. Bell, J. Littleton, A. Braithwaite, L. Carew, R. Kaupp,  
C. MacKay, A. Sheridan.*



*Prefects 1961*

'REFECTS.

L. to R.: P. Riley, J. Hogan, P. Ryan, A. Jensen (School Captain), Fr. Rector, P. Coogan (Vice-Captain), M. Waugh, P. Brogan.

Fr John Burford became the 3rd Rector coming from Downlands College in Toowoomba.

Fr Harold Baker MSC was the Bursar 1952-54, and Dormitory and Sports Master 1955-1957. He taught Maths and Fr Burford taught English and History. The whole place needed to be painted again, so Father Baker arranged for an architect to give us a few colour schemes.

For fibro roofs and walls an emulsion paint was required. The colour scheme was celadon green walls and corridors, black guttering, white window frames (gloss),

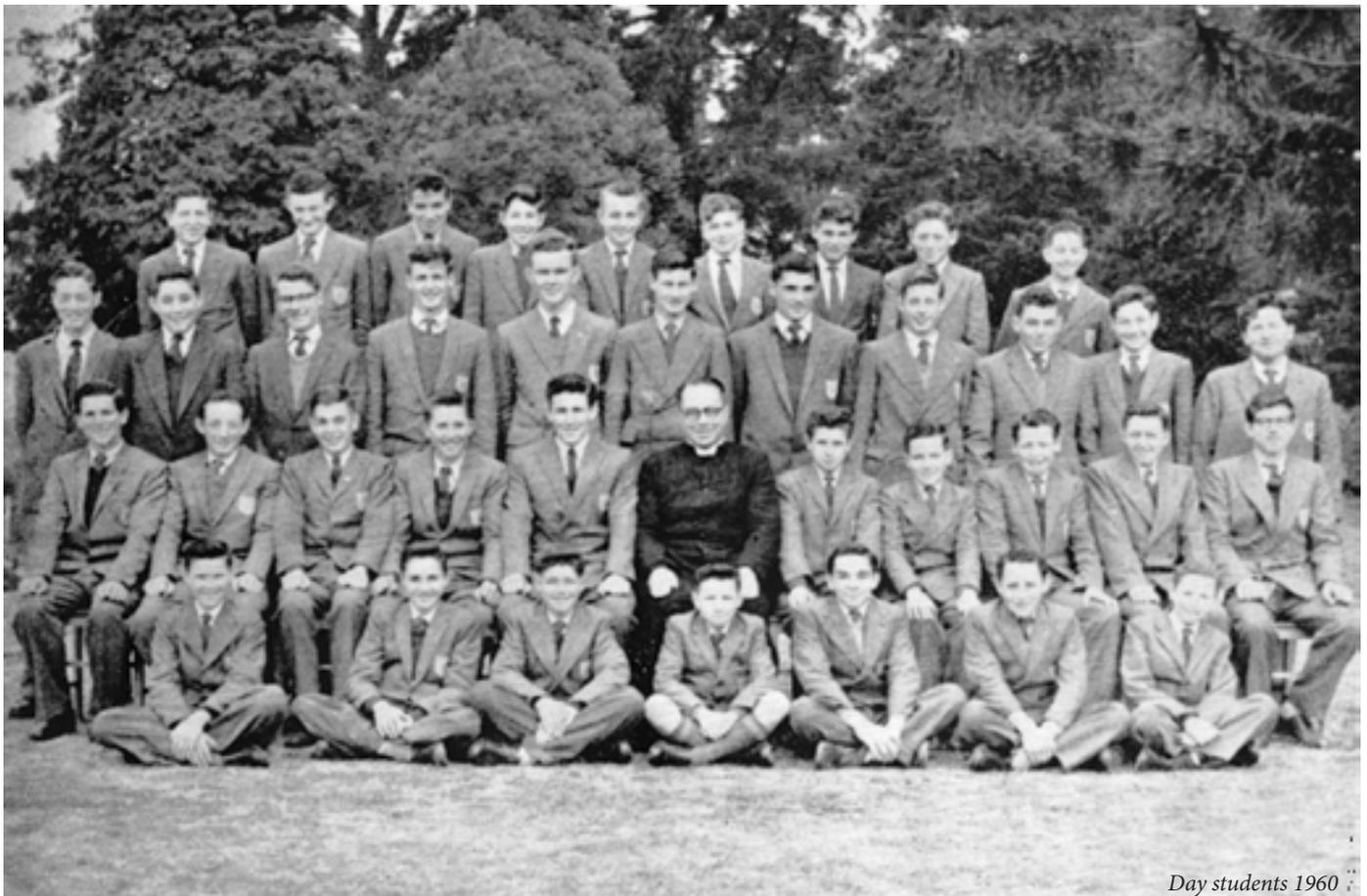
daffodil under the eaves, Cotswold green doors, a combination of Celadon, green and white columns, and terracotta roofs. This I remember well as it became my six year task to paint the place inside and out, sometimes helped by Br John King. We were good buddies – even fished together down at Sussex Inlet where we holidayed from two or three weeks before Christmas, 1950-1960.

Fr Bill McCormack was our next Bursar and when I came to the Riversdale

building he bought me a pressure spray gun to cope with the shingles and roofs. I also remember painting 180 bed frames with white Duco enamel and many lockers inside and out. I smoked all this time and luckily have never had emphysema, though I now have asthma.

Eventually I got back to cooking and one of our boy's parents, Jack Mylott of Moruya, a baker himself, suggested we buy a baker's oven, to cope with the cooking for 200 hungry boys and staff.

We found one at Narromine and two of the Brothers



*Day students 1960*

Kevin Guthrie and John Braithwaite, I think, drove a truck out to collect it. We had it installed where the coke bin was, previously for the Aga stoves. It was a diesel oil burner oven, capable of cooking 200 pies at one go.

We bought a pastry roller and eventually Brother Reg Pritchard (a bulldozer welder before joining us) built an eight foot folding table with a stainless steel top for the kitchen. He asked me to design it. It had folding ends when not in use. We could spread out 100 pie tins, 4 x 25 along it.

In that oven we cooked roast meat – 26 legs of lamb or beef, baked vegetables, cakes, scones, desserts etc. We had a seven gallon mixer and I made my own. For the pies we needed three quarters puff tops and half puff bottoms, also a variety of machines for toasting.



*First XI 1965*

The pies were very popular with the boys and staff – one and a half pies each. I think we had up to 300 boys boarding at one stage.

We had a carborundum stone potato peeler, can openers and knife sharpeners. Brother Vin White was my companion.

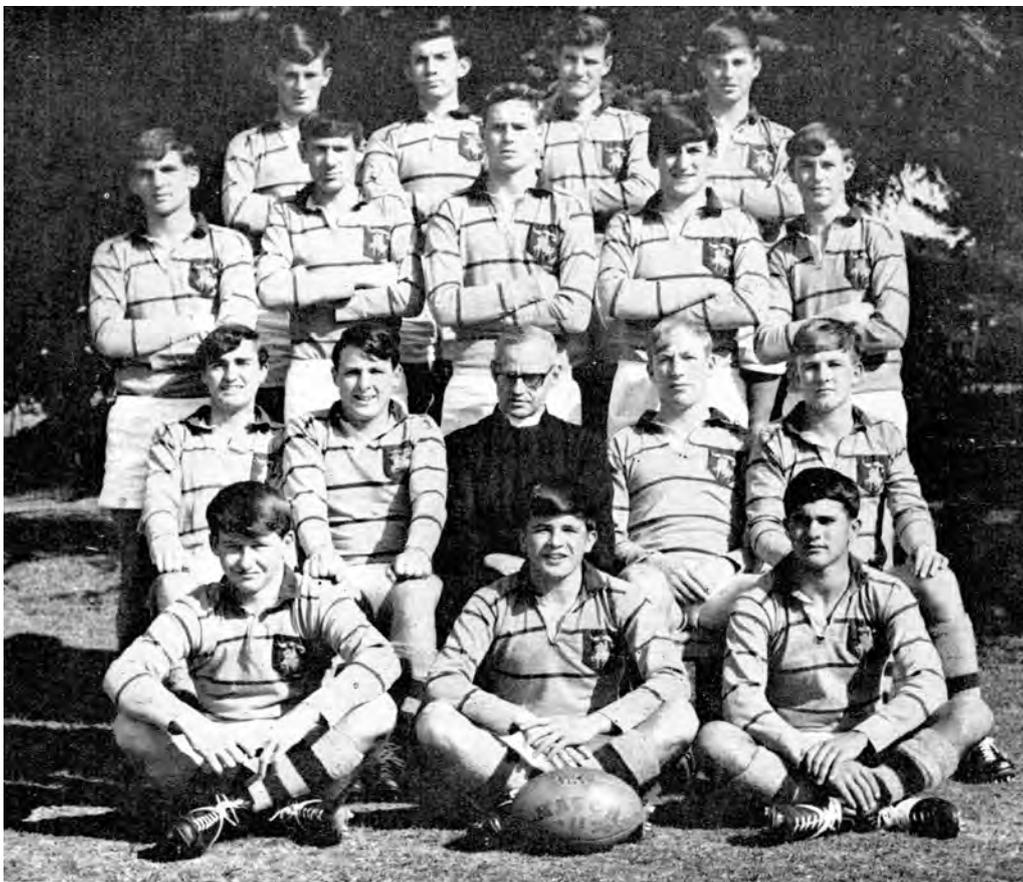
We also had three local ladies Bonny Targa and Barbara Moore, and Cath Parry who looked after the boys' dining room. Joan Ford and many others over the years also helped out – all wonderful people. The caterers under Joe Mander took over in the 1970s.

Brother Reg Pritchard also built many wonderful things for daily use, and was a tractor driver and equipment designer. He built me a rack to take six bikes for the top of my 1964 Holden EK – I still have same.

Another job I had was cutting hair (I had two electric clippers as one would get hot at times).

Brother Bill Ross also cut hair. Mr Bernie Donaghue of Bowral golf fame, and an offsider took over from us eventually and cut the boys hair.

*First XV 1965*



*1st XV*

*Back: K. Smith, P. Kelly, M. Coyne, P. Drury.  
Third: R. Hannan, N. Stormon, C. Evans, D. Bourke, B. McMahon.  
Second: F. Morrissy, G. Auton (Captain), Fr. Doneley, G. Blutch (vice-capt.), J. Potter.  
Front: S. McMahon, J. Drummond, G. Spears.*

# 11

## Sports and Holidays

Bernie won twenty-two championships at Bowral Country and Golf Clubs over the years, and was a great chip and put man. I played at Bowral

Country Club as well. There was a 70 par hilly course. I had a 74 there one day. I love the game and got down to a 12 handicap at Monivae College, Hamilton, at one stage and two holes in one shot. I am now on a 36 handicap at 87 years' young (2014).

Brother Alan Kinnane came down from the Eastern Papuan Mission to Chevalier. Brothers George Cusack, Michael Carroll, Tom Walsh, Kevin Guthrie, Kevin Ehlefeldt, Peter Harvey Jackson, Bob Lysaught, Pat Cauty, Leo Wasson, Joe Patterson and many others came to Chevalier over the years. Joe's brother, Val, was later Rector at Chevalier 1971-1974.

Alan Kinnane, Joe Patterson and I were keen bike riders. From 1950 to 1960 we spent our holidays at Sussex Inlet. We cycled down there and came back three weeks later.

We travelled through Kangaroo Valley, up Cambewarra Mountain and on to Nowra and Sussex Inlet, a distance of seventy miles.

We also cycled to Moruya and Wollongong and up Macquarie Pass to Robertson. We even rode to Bateman's Bay from Bowral one year in 100 degree temperature.

The three of us used to race one another round a twenty mile circuit from Chevalier to Moss Vale, to the turn off to Kangaloon and back home again.

We also had a thirty-mile circuit from Chevalier to Bowral, up past the Bowral Country Golf Club, to the Hume Highway, to Berrima, to the Cross Roads, to Sutton Forest, Moss Vale and back to Chevalier.

We cycled five minutes apart – Alan first, then myself, then Joe. One hour twenty-seven minutes was my best time. We had gears even in those days. Joe Patterson did it in one hour thirty minutes without gears.

We had wonderful holidays at Sussex Inlet fishing in The Entrance and the Georges Basin. Each cottage had a diesel boat, and the use of tennis courts. There was also an 18 hole golf course, cut out of the virgin bush with proper greens and tees. Fr Kingston Summerhayes and I were invited to play by an ex-policeman next door. We were the first to use it from the College. I've played golf since I was eight, on a course that was built by Bede Merrick and Bill Donahue.

Bill won the Lithgow Championship a couple of years in a row. Bede got down to a handicap of eight at the Oatley Golf Club in Sydney.

After I gave up smoking I went from a fifteen to twelve handicap which was my lowest. On our holidays at Sussex Inlet Mr Tilburn, Paul's father (Chev old boy, RIP), used to take us out at three o'clock in the morning for deep sea fishing. We had to get back across the bar on high tide. Brother King cut my line when I caught a three foot eel.

In 1946 the senior tennis players were Jim Brennan and Pat McKenna. The photos tell the story of the football and the results and also the cricket and athletics. Kanga McCreay won the Juniorate title, not the Senior title. A lot of the 1946 photos tell a fair bit of the following years.

# 12

## Other Activities at Chevalier

A dairy was built by Ernie McGrath's brother, Lou; and I was his brickie's labourer. John King was the carpenter and designer. We eventually had 38 cows being milked with machines and separators. We sent milk to the Bowral Milk Factory together with the Kerever Park Convent's jersey cows' milk.

Brother Bede Commerford was the first dairyman; Brother Tom Walsh was his assistant. Bede came down from Port Keats and Darwin to Chevalier. The Bowral COOP motto was 'you can whip our cream but you can't beat our milk'. I guess we all had a stint on the dairy.

Brother Tom Walsh took over the dining room (the boys called it Uncle Tom's Cabin). When making pies, Brother White and I made a special pie for Stephen Brogan's birthday, and Vin went down to the dam and caught a yabby. We put it in the pie crust and on Steve cutting it open the yabby jumped out to the delight of the boys. Steve probably has forgiven us by now.

His brother Pat was a champion miler from Moruya. Douglas Park students competed with us and other schools in athletics on the main oval.

Father Tyler was a great musical director/song writer and Frs Sykes and McMahan were both good piano players. One song Fr Tyler composed was for the football team:

*'We play good football, at least we've been told  
and we find it convenient to keep out the cold.  
We're fed on potatoes and spinach and beef,  
as a precaution to keep out the cold and defeat.'*

Many a nose has been broken coming up out of the scrum. We had great old sing songs. Br Gerry Bourke was a student in those days and later became a Brother and is now in Darwin.

Gerry was a very good 100, 220 and 440 yard runner and came second in the athletics carnival championships. He had impaired vision and so did not play much football.

Br Richard Hillsdon was our first school captain. He had great skills in cricket, golf and tennis. He joined the MSC but died ten years ago. He played off eight.



We had a boy from Noumea, Mark Mouledoux who spoke only French when he arrived.

The included photos will bring back names and wonderful memories. Br Greg McCann (senior) and I are the last survivors of the MSC staff in 1946. Greg is 94 and a priest at Kensington Monastery.

One of the colourful characters of the early sixties, Brother Paul Brooks, had bus excursions to almost anywhere. He purchased a new chassis and drove it to Brisbane to have the body built into it. In addition he purchased a double decker bus from Wollongong that unfortunately could not fit well under the Moss Vale bridge! This necessitated taking a longer route so that the bus could go over the railway line rather than under it. For another bus he had to get a gearbox sent up from Wollongong. If you have a few spare hours he will gladly fill you in.

## Other Chevalier Personalities

In the 1950s we were fortunate to have some older boys who were preparing for the priesthood and who were sponsored by the bishops of Wollongong and Wagga Wagga.

These students included Pat Power (later auxiliary bishop of Canberra and Goulburn), John Fahey (later Premier of NSW and now Chancellor of the Australian Catholic University) and John Smith MSC (now living in Adelaide).

Fr Tyson Doneley is not well at the time of writing and at 92 now resides at St Joseph's Nursing Home at Kensington. However, his bowling and batting at cricket is well known. He turned down the opportunity to play cricket for Australia at one stage, and he was also very good at tennis and golf.

Vivian McGrath also had a chance of playing cricket or tennis for Australia. He died in the Lodge near the main oval in 1978 at the age of 65.

Other Brothers who served at Chevalier College in my time included Terry Barry, Kevin McAteer, Tom Fitzgerald.

Other priests included Brian White, Kevin Graydon, Tom Whitty, Vin Dwyer, Michael Fallon, Austin Sheridan and Brian Scrivener. As I write, most of the earlier priests and brothers have died. This includes all the priests of the original group and four of the five brothers.

Leo Carew, one of the first lay teachers, lived in our cottage near the Charlotte Street gates for many years. A recent Chevalier principal and past student, Fred Stubenraugh lives with his wife, Sue, at St Marys Towers, Douglas Park. They served as lay missionaries in Kiribati for some years.

Br Dave Smith, in my year of profession, and Br Charles Laing worked in the MSC General House in Rome in the 1950s.



1971

JUBILEE MASS CELEBRANTS.

Left to right: Fr. V. C. Patterson, present Rector; Fr. J. Burford, former Rector; Fr. J. F. McMahon, Provincial; Fr. J. J. McMahon, former Rector; Fr. J. J. Littleton, previous Rector.



*Fr John Bell with debating team members 1961*

I enjoyed being involved in coaching, managing and refereeing rugby. I coached the under 15Bs to a minor premiership in 1960; Peter Corcoran was my captain.

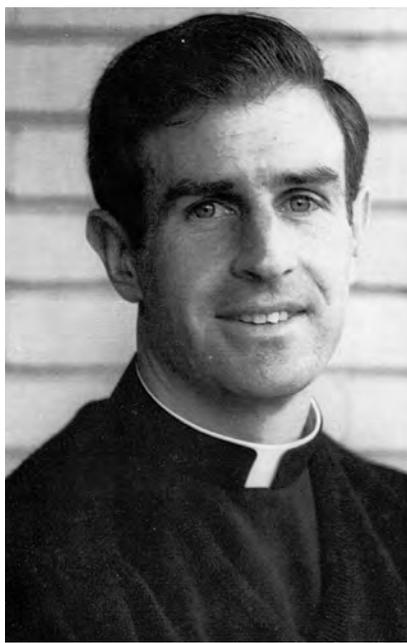
Fr Howard Brady coached the Under 15As to victory in the same year.

Fr Harvey Edmiston was a sports master and referee. He and I refereed under 19 and Under 21 teams from Canberra and Sydney on one occasion. I ended up coaching and refereeing, marking lines and setting up covers on goal posts for nearly thirty years in NSW, QLD and ACT. I won two premierships with the Daramalan Under 12s in 1990 and 2001. I refereed at Gold Park in Toowoomba when I was stationed there.

In 1968 I was transferred to Downlands College in Toowoomba for five years. In 1973 I was appointed to the MSC scholasticate in Canberra for one year. I write about those years later.

I came back to Chevalier in 1974 as cook and infirmarian. Later I joined the catering staff and worked with Kath Parry, Bonny Targa, Joe Mander, Jane Ford, Barbara Moore and Lynne Wade. At one stage I coached their wonderful volleyball catering team, known as the Flagons.

I was transferred from Chevalier College to Daramalan College at the end of 1980.



*Above; Br Vince White*

*Far left; Fr Val Patterson*

*Left; Fr Terry Herbert*

# 14

## Southern Highlands Bike Club and Racing

In 1976 Brian Ward, a lay person and I started the Southern Highlands Bike Club.

We submitted our colours, lime green, white and red to the NSW Amateur Cycling Federation and got approval and were given our set of Rules and Regulations.

We started off with about seven or eight riders from Bowral, Moss Vale and Bundanoon. We used to ride locally and at Goulburn at the kind invitation of Mrs Joan Knight and the Goulburn Club members and families. We raced track and road there.

In 1974 I raced in the Classic Road Race, the Goulburn to Sydney (Liverpool). There were one hundred and twenty riders that year if I remember correctly. It was then a handicap race. I had fifty five minutes start from the scratchies. I would have been 42 years of age then. I enjoyed the race and loved the hills.

I found out on arrival at Liverpool that I had won two sprints, one at Bundanoon and one at Mittagong. We kept off the Hume Highway as much as we could, by going through such places as Bundanoon, Sutton Forest, Colo Vale, Bringelly and Hoxton Park. My time was five hours and sixteen minutes for the one hundred and twenty six miles in those days. Harry Shaw, the winning rider, took four hours eighteen minutes.

We raced over Razorback Mountain and fortunately had no punctures. Then that night I stayed with Dr Jim Tudehope's family and played two sets of tennis against Peter Tudehope. I was pretty tired but very happy and I ended up with cycling cuff links and tie links and \$50 worth of trophies. I tried again 1975-77, but not successfully.

I approached the Federal Sports Minister, Mr Brown, for a grant for a velodrome at Burradoo or Bowral, and received a grant for \$110,000 dollars. I took a model

in sand, in a carton, with measurements and angles, circumferences, straights, circle and angle of banks taken from the Toowoomba Track where I had raced, 1968-1972. I loved to race on it at night and in competition, with a fixed wheel bike and no brakes and one gear.

I took the plan to Bowral Council through Mr Harry Springett, the local council member and mayor, whom I had contact with through cooking and his wholesale family business.

The Council passed it eventually and the velodrome is wonderful. It has just been resurfaced with green concrete, red, blue and white lines and new lights. NSW U14 and U15 championships were held there at Easter this year. I was invited to present the gold, silver and bronze medals – quite a pleasant surprise.

In 1980 I unfortunately was transferred to Monivae MSC College in Hamilton, Victoria for six years. I took my bikes and golf clubs with me. The Southern Highlands Club, under the Presidency of Mr Dave Schales and club members, finished the track off and the environs. A basketball court and toilets were also built next to the Rugby Club on the Moss Vale Bowral Road at Elizabeth Street, below Chevalier. Mr Vollebret and his son Richard and friends and council finished the velodrome that included a tubular and wire mesh safety fence. It is now a picture.

The Southern Highlands Club now has an astonishing number of riders and members – 250 two years ago. They also had four world champions at Mountain Bikes and Off Road, Track and Road.

One boy, Michael Williamson died of heart trouble in South Africa after winning his race. Two of the boys were from Chevalier and two from the Club. Recently one boy, Caleb Ewan, has applied to ride for Australian Green Edge team in a year or so; it is all very heartening.

I've gone back to a three-wheel golf buggy. I have no driving licence after a heart problem. I still have a touring bike (aluminium frame).

Over the years I have had a modicum of success on the bikes: one 1st and 2nd in the Southern District Road Championship at Nowra and Goulburn; a 1st and 2nd in two two-day tours from Canberra to Goulburn to Braidwood and back to Bungendore; a 2nd in the Yass to Young and back to Bowning. I participated in several races and championships, all in the Vets division, on the tracks and velodromes. I still love to watch them.

At the moment here in Narrabundah Canberra, they are resurfacing the track with flexipave. They are also repairing the buildings and will be putting new lights in eventually, so I'm a very happy camper at the moment.

I still have the bikes but the tyres are flat; a Merida aluminium bike with 20 gears, mountain type bike, or off road really.

I thought I might mention some characters during those years at Chevalier – David Lyons, Tony Herlihy, John Hore, Trevor Bouffier, John Marlowe, Greg Walsh, intrepid President Ian 'Bluey' Roberts, Matt Waugh, Tony Vereker to name a few of the early ones.

Father Terry Herbert, my long time tennis partner, is still at Chevalier. He loves bike racing and is still with the Masters games as I was way back then. I won a bronze medal at Wagga in a time-trial.

Father Albert Yelds of Sacred Heart Missions fame (who has been in Kiribati since 1988) at one stage bequeathed to me one of his old EK Holdens, out of which the boys had pulled the engine. The crank shaft had broken and there were pieces of engine everywhere. He said to me: "Davey, if you want a car, go and assemble the EK." Quite took me by surprise! The only mechanical experience I had was from watching my dad and brothers. Anyway I eventually succeeded in getting it mobile and registered and hand painted.

This car became the beginning of the cycling for the boys and myself. Mr Lenholm, Robbie's brother, an old boy who was a mechanic from Mittagong, helped me greatly over the years. I eventually had a six cylinder red motor and two radiators in the EK, much to the surprise of many garages.

Later on I bought an EH Holden in a trade-in for a track bike. I only had to replace the gear box. Brother Reg Pritchard welded a six space bike rack, which I still have. We used that bike rack for all our cycle trips and tours.

One Boxing Day we raced on the track at Goulburn; then over the next few days we cycled to Wagga, Albury, Gilgandra, Dubbo, Wellington and Bathurst. At night we raced on the local tracks and velodromes.

My job was driver, mechanic, cook and pusher of bikes. Great fun and the boys were great! I even had my own cheer squad of fathers and mothers at the races.

*Burradoo Velodrome*



# 15

## Coeducation and other Memories of Chevalier College

The college became co-educational in 1973 following a merger with the Dominican Convent. Students in Years 7 and 8 had classes on the Moss Vale site, while Years 9-12 students were taught at the Bowral site.

We had to provide more facilities to cope with the extra students. Most of the new buildings in those years were constructed by Mr Alf Herbert, Father Terry's dad.

Father Brian Strangman was the main librarian in the 1960s, quite a wonderful character; before his time in many respects in some of the projects he introduced.

Father Arthur Braithwaite was our printer and roneo operator, a man of many parts.

Father Tony Prentice was an indefatigable worker in school and in the grounds, rockeries and tree planting.

Some of our sports masters over the years were Fathers John Tyler, John Mooney, Tony Bolt, Harvey Edmiston and Tyson Doneley. He was our Rector in the early 1960s; he coached the 1st XV of '62 and '63 very successfully – possibly the best years in Chevalier's rugby history.

We had twenty two teams at one stage competing against St Pat's Goulburn, St Pat's Strathfield, Oak Hill, Downlands, Daramalan and many others at Wollongong, Canberra, the Navy from Jervis Bay.

Frs Bolt, Edmiston, Dempsey, Kaupp, Andersen and I were junior and senior referees as were Frs Littleton, Baker, Prentice over the years – great fun all told.

I have many great memories of the Chevalier days 1946-1968, both as a Brother on the MSC staff, and with the members of the teaching staff, maintenance staff and of course the students - all boys then. Many wonderful 'lives lived'; wonderful graced filled years with happy memories.

There are some sad memories of the loss now of staff and boys and their parents and friends, who did a wonderful job for the College. May they rest in peace.

It is great to meet up again with past members and particularly the past students at reunions and special occasions such as Jubilees. On the weekend of 8-9 November 2013 we met again at Chevalier for a 1953 and 1963 years reunion. I thought I would let the photos tell the stories of students and staff, while it intertwines with my own 'convict' history of which I am very proud.

Maybe I shall return, like Macarthur, to Chevalier someday. I really enjoy calling in there, which I do quite often. I always feel welcome.

# 16

## Downlands College, 1968-1972

At the beginning of 1968 I was appointed to Downlands College, Toowoomba by a phone call from Father Provincial J F McMahon. I was asked to cook for 450 boys, the MSC community and teaching staff. Tyson Manor at Downlands College was once the residence of the Doneley family.

I spent five years at Downlands. Imagine cooking pies etc for 500 people!

After 22 years at Chevalier it was quite a shock. Chevalier then had about 350 boarders. My poor mother was really shocked as well. She said to me: "Don't go to Queensland, I'll never see you again". She was 86 at the time. Nevertheless, off I started in the train from Central Station, Sydney.

Before leaving the station my brother Jack and his wife Hilda appeared and told me that mum had just broken her wrist from a fall. It was so sad for all of us. Anyway I said to them: "I can't stay, as I have only a week to prepare

for supplies and cooking for 500 people – so many people - a different city and different stoves and so far away".

Later I heard from Jack, or from Pat my twin, that mum had tried to cut off the plaster on her wrist with a carving knife. She hated the plaster and knowing my mum, she was a determined woman. Anyway, later on in May she was moved to Mt Victoria hospital with failing kidneys. She died there, where Pat, my twin, his wife Shirley and their family had their home. One of the priests from Southport, Fr Jennings, came down to our holiday house, looking for Brother Merrick. He said to me: "Brother, your mother is very seriously ill" and in the next breath he said: "as a matter of fact,



she is dead". So, I set out for home in a small plane from Coolangatta to Sydney and then by train to Mt Victoria. We buried mum in Lithgow Cemetery with my dad. He had died in 1937. May they rest in peace.

Then after a week or so I headed back to Downlands College. Father John Mooney was the Rector, Fr Bede North was the Bursar. In the kitchen with me was Brother Jack Powell, 70 years old from Tasmania and Brother Vin White.

Toowoomba is a lovely city. Downlands is a magnificent college, with wonderful gardens, three terraces and several ovals overlooking Toowoomba. It was then a city of about 80,000 people, 1800 feet above sea level and 80 miles from Brisbane to the east. The climate was lovely; the day temperatures did not get above the 90s and there was only an occasional frost and fog. However, there were very cold winds from the west in winter, particularly up on the ovals.

The kitchen had Aga stoves and a gas stove and very good equipment with automatic toasters, mixing machines, a carborundum potato peeler and two steam 20 gallon cookers. The staff and students were great and welcoming.

We eventually bought an oil burner baker's oven from downtown and were able to continue making pies, sausage rolls and every other baked type of cooking. Eventually we employed a wonderful Scottish lady Mrs Helen McNaught, to cook for the MSC community and some of the teaching staff.

Brother Vin and I and Brother Ernie McGrath joined the City Golf Club. We had many great football and cricket games against other colleges, such as Toowoomba Grammar.

Jack Fox was the tennis coach. I loved tennis and golf and ended up refereeing football matches occasionally even down at Gold Park in the city. Chevalier came and beat us in 1968. I think the score was 30-10 in Chevalier's favour, much to my delight. Of course I had to barrack for Chevalier after over 22 years there, I told them Queenslanders.

I joined the Toowoomba Cycling Club and loved the road and track racing. Their velodrome was only a quarter of a mile away from the College, so I was a frequent visitor on moonlit nights.

Eighty laps, with sprints every ten laps, was my aim. I had quite a few successes – wins on road and track. Eventually, I bought a five star lugless track bike. It was very light and great to ride.

Downlands comes down to play rugby against our schools at Bowral and Canberra every few years and Chevalier goes up there also.

Eventually I was appointed back south and a catering firm took over the catering.



# 17

## Canberra MSC House of Studies 1973

I was appointed to Canberra Monastery in 1973 with the responsibility of cooking for the community. It was composed of 35 MSC students and about ten priests and brothers.

I arrived with two bikes, a set of golf sticks and luggage at the Canberra Monastery, but without my great little dog, an Australian terrier, named 'Tiny', which I left behind in Toowoomba. It was a great change from 1000 meals a day, as Fr Bell called our cooking endeavours.

I had plenty of time riding and bike racing and playing golf occasionally. I joined the ACT Cycling Club and raced on Canberra's 45 degree angle banked velodrome at Narrabundah which would be 12 kilometres from the Monastery, which itself was near the Canberra Drive In theatre. I rode on a track bike with fixed wheel and no brakes to the velodrome.

We had many road races and two day tours. One was from Canberra to Goulburn overnight, and then back through Braidwood and Bungendore. There was a great storm and high winds on the return trip. Quite a few riders retired and I won the race.

The second tour was from Yass to Young and next day back to Bowning, 12 miles from Yass. In this race I ended up second to a boy from Young, who had previously won the Goulburn to Sydney Road Classic, 200 km.

At one stage I was asked to learn carpentry at Canberra Technical College, but the students were moved back to Melbourne at the end of 1973 and I was transferred back to Chevalier College in 1974. There I replaced Br Tom McMahon who had died suddenly from a heart attach. I acted as cook and infirmarian there for six years, 1974-1979.



# 18

## Monivae College 1980-1985

In 1980 I was appointed to Monivae College in Hamilton, Victoria and I remained there for six years. The College was founded in 1954 and is 180 miles west of Melbourne.

I acted as cook for four years and then as caretaker of the two court basketball centres and the 25 metre swimming pool. Fr Jock O'Connor was instrumental in getting the swimming pool built.

It took me fourteen hours to drive from Lithgow to Hamilton in the EK Holden that I had put together. A broken windscreen at Holbrook slowed me down considerably. On arriving, there were hardly any lights on and only a big Great Dane dog to greet me, as it was holiday-time. I eventually found Mr Terry Walsh in the TV room. I was made very welcome next day as I was to cook for them.

Whilst I was at Monivae my great friend, Brother Pat Canty, whom I was with in the novitiate at Douglas Park died suddenly in May 1980 in Canberra from a sudden heart attack. Rest in peace.

Monivae had 300 boys and girls at the College when I arrived. Hamilton has a population of about 10,000 people and is known as the wool capital of the world. Yass is known as the fine wool capital. The College was founded in 1954 and is 180 miles west of Melbourne.

I brought an electric bakers oven down from Sydney behind the EK Holden (red motor 186 and a second mini-radiator under the bonnet). The electric bakers oven was a great help in baking pies, sausage rolls and pizzas; seventeen bakers' trays of same to feed the multitude.

I eventually had two apprentices to teach and two great women, Nancy and Pat, helping me cook. Nola Dyson was also a great help to me. We had hot cupboards with water boiling underneath to help with the serving of the meals. Self-serving also helped instead of having so many dishes to each table. Four of us served out the meals for dinner: meat and two vegs, gravy and dessert, in one go; it took about 20 minutes to finish serving the meal.

We baked roasts, pies, sausages and rolls, steak and onions and pizzas etc. I made up a five week menu, which helped greatly in ordering and cooking a variety of goods.



We had a herd of Hereford cattle at the College. Brother Ken Gallagher looked after them. He decided to send two Hereford cattle each month to be slaughtered and cut up for us. Later he bought two Murray Grey calves and fattened them up. He said they took a month to become beef cattle. When he sent the two into the butchers he told me: "Let me know what they were like as beef". So on asking me what they were like, I told him they made great gravy. Ken said: "The bastards I have met!" We were still great mates. He died a year or so back, quite a wonderful character. Rest in peace.

Father Denis Uhr was the Principal during my time at Monivae, and Ken Gallagher the Bursar. Denis and I played tennis and badminton in the local tournaments. I also joined the Cycling Club in Victoria and took part in many races.

I got used to Aussie Rules and had two trips to Tasmania with Monivae teams. I also joined the Hamilton Golf Club. I made a pact with Brother Beelen that I would give up smoking if he would put his name down in writing on a waiting list for an operation on his hip. In doing so I reduced my 15 handicap to 12 but for a short time only.

Going back to Lithgow for holidays was always a very long trip. Victorian number plates didn't help as I was often beeped for some unknown transgression by NSW drivers.

I enjoyed my six years at Monivae College.



# 19

## Mission Experience in Kiribati 1986

In 1986 Fr Frank Quirk appointed Brother Danny Hawe and myself to the MSC Mission in Kiribati. It is two degrees above the equator and 500 miles across from Nauru.

The biggest island in the group is Tarawa which is 16 kilometres long and 500 metres wide. We looked after the first eleven professed brothers from the 32 little islands in the group.

Danny was a wonderful Irishman who served on the supply ships of the British navy during World War II. He told me that many supply ships were torpedoed.

He was a great storyteller and a wonderful personality. He belonged to a Melbourne Aussie Rules club, was a mile runner and worked as chief chucker-out of patrons in Young and Jackson famous pub in Melbourne.

The Kiribati people are a happy, music loving and friendly people who enjoy singing. They are very poor, and live on breadfruit, rice and fish. They use outrigger canoes and nets for fishing, catching mainly milk and tuna fish.

There were not many trades except at Betio, another island. There was a school at Tarawa and another at Biriki. I repaired a 15 foot Cheetah Cat dual hull boat which had been holed by a coconut. I had a sail in it before I left.

Bishop Paul Mea was great to us. Some French priests were on different islands. I did the bursar's job and Danny looked after the spiritual side. They had a wonderful chapel built by a French brother. It had coloured louvres for windows.

We returned to Sydney before Christmas 1986. I visited home and then went to Daramalan College.



# 20

## Daramalan College 1987-2014

I am writing this at Daramalan College, where I have now lived for 26 years. I will soon be 88 years of age.

When I arrived at Daramalan from the Kiribati Islands, Father Bob Irwin welcomed me so very kindly as he always does.

My first tasks were collecting the mail including parcels from the Dickson Post Office. I did the banking of small change from two tuckshops, and I was courier for the

College. This involved picking up videos, library books, and different national flags from the embassies for their particular days of celebration. We ran them up on the College flagpoles for that day. I had to return them a few days later to the various embassies.



I also did the cooking for the MSCs and was in charge of buying all the groceries from Dickson and wherever. IGA also supplied the order for groceries once a month and the Fyshwick markets filled an order once a week for fruit and vegetables.

I was a Pastoral Care Assistant for Year 8 and was Brother Paul McGuigan's offsider for teaching Year 8 Technical Drawing and Metalwork for 12 months.

In the next year, 1988, I was appointed maintenance manager for our Junior School in Davenport Street, which had approximately 210 pupils and five or six teachers.

Debbie Conway was in charge of the school, Yvonne Fortescue was the librarian, and Felicity Roberts was the





*Merrick House Crest*

secretary. Patricia Kenneally later took over from Debbie Conway. We were a happy team and it was a wonderful primary school.

I mowed the oval and looked after the leaves and plants; in autumn there were acorns and leaves aplenty. I was also courier between the Junior School and the College.

The Junior School closed at the end of 1996.

In anticipation of this closure, the College welcomed female students into Year 7 in 1996. Previously girls had been enrolled only in Years 11 and 12. Now the College is fully coeducational, but with day students only; the College has never provided boarding facilities.

In 2014 there are 160 teachers and support staff and an enrolment of 1400 students.

The students are divided into eight houses for pastoral and sporting purposes. The College named one in my honour ten years ago. (See above)

The MSC Community live on campus, five of whom are former members of staff at Chevalier College: Harold Baker (now 90 years of age), Jim Littleton, Paul Brooks,

*Whole school students and staff heart photo taken each year at Daramalan on Sacred Heart Day*



*Daramalan athletics carnival winners being presented with the Merrick Shield by Br Dave Merrick*



Barry Smith and myself. Barry is the Business Manager for the College. Our Community Leader, John Walker, is a registered nurse; he comes from Lithgow as did Val Patterson who was Rector of Chevalier College, 1971-1974.

In 1996 I was delighted to be offered the opportunity to travel to Europe, where I enjoyed several weeks in Italy, France, England and Ireland. Of particular interest to me was the Tour de France, part of which I witnessed, as well as some well known golf course in England and Ireland.

Some years ago Felicity Roberts' husband, Phil, built a two seater plane in his garage and the plane is now at

*At the Daramalan Residence  
Back row, John Coonan and Fr Jim Littleton  
Front, Fr Harold Baker, Meg Coonan and Br Dave Merrick*





*Golden Jubilee 1996. From left; Robert and Shirley, Dave, Noel and Margaret, and Nellie*

Bankstown airport in Sydney. Phil was a helicopter pilot who served in Vietnam.

They have had two girls and one boy educated at Daramalan. Their daughter Anne looks after the Uniform Shop at the College. Felicity has helped me with typing this life story. Many thanks for her patience and generosity.

In conclusion I would like to pay tribute to all the wonderful people I have met over many years, my wonderful parents, brothers and sisters-in-law and their families.

Thanks also to my teachers: Mr Fred Hawes who taught Pat and me at Bowenfels, and the Marist Brothers at St Joseph's, Hunters Hill and at Mittagong.

Thanks also to my Novice Master Fr Hoy and to the bursars at Douglas Park at that time. Fr Tom Drake and Brother Robert South were the first MSC I met at Leura before joining the MSC at St Mary's Towers.

Many thanks to all the past students of Chevalier, Downlands, Monivae and Daramalan, who so generously give their time and money to so many causes. They have a wonderful appreciation for all that has been done for them at school and over many years – 67 years for myself in the College scene.

My theory is that 'life is what you make it' and many wonderful friends and neighbours help considerably. So 'life is very much worth living'; what a great blessing a vocation in Religious life is to a person – so many graces, Mass and Holy Communion each day, and very many happy and grateful students, teachers and parents to share life with. One lad asked me what would I do if I had my life over again. I replied I would choose exactly the same.

*From left; Steve, Emma, Josh, Lauren and Larni*





## A Prayer for Friends and Helpers

Lord Jesus, we pray for our friends and helpers. Through their generosity, we have been able to make your Heart known and loved. Bless them always, so that their kindness may be known and loved and continually to help those in need. Strengthen them in faith and hardships and disappointments. Reward their charity with Eternal Life and Joy with you in Heaven. Amen.

