

Andrew Neil Dutney 15/8/1929 – 9/4/2022

READER: MARK DUTNEY

When I think of dad, the word “constant” comes to mind. Dad was constant in his devotion to his wife, his family, his work, his church, his golf, and his life and health in general.

He was a good listener and offered advice if asked for, but never gave it as a directive.

I loved my dad, and respected his opinion and thoughts. He was an exceptionally intelligent man and excelled in all his academic endeavours. In the areas of his life where he was not as adept, he strove to improve them. As a younger man, he could be emotionally detached and awkward, and he invested a lot of effort in improving this. I remember when we became a hugging family. Dad had been attending a human relations course and decided that the best thing to do to acknowledge family was to greet each other with a hug and not a handshake. He awkwardly embarked on this path with firm determined hugging that was characterised by a bear hug sort of squeeze and associated grunt to express enthusiasm for the task. We are all much better at hugging now and it's a vast improvement on the old stiff upper lip, English handshake greeting.

He was a pragmatic man and very accepting of events in his life, I believe this accepting attitude was inherent but was certainly augmented by his deep and abiding Christian faith. He accepted with grace, mum's death some 3 and 1/2 years ago, and made a great fist of continuing his life as a widower. He continued to enjoy time with his family, involvement with church life, his golf with “the old and bold” veterans group at the Indooroopilly Golf Club, and his ongoing engagement with the world at large and as it resided in his passion for reading. (He had just finished rereading the complete 20 novel series of The Cadfael Chronicles by Ellis Peters.)

There is no doubt that Dad could have been a legal academic if he had wanted to. He won the University Medal for excellence in his law degree at Queensland University. He was encouraged on more than one occasion to consider applying for a position in the Law Faculty. But he was a very practical man and, to the great advantage and satisfaction of his clients, the day to day practice of a solicitor suited him.

One lawyer remembers Dad in this way:

Neil was Peter's father and it was in that context that many of us knew him. We also knew him as a very competent senior partner of Cannan & Peterson as it was known at the time. Even then, Neil had the reputation of being not only a very intelligent, competent solicitor but a caring man.

I first met Neil in person at the time of Peter's 21st birthday. Neil and Beth had a formal dinner for Peter's friends at the Burns Road house. To my surprise, that night, Neil was the wine waiter. Clearly his family was central to him and on that occasion he was determined that Peter enjoy his 21st birthday.

To meet Neil was to be immediately struck by the fact that you were meeting a very intelligent person but also one without airs and graces and also a genial and welcoming person. In legal practice, one soon respected his intelligence, his preparation and also the cordial way in which he could disagree with you, if warranted.

From a personal perspective, if I found that I had taken a position contrary to that adopted by Neil, I reviewed my position before proceeding. I don't think my attitude was uncommon.

To know Neil was also to be struck by the central place that his family and his religious faith played in his life. This seemed obvious at the times of Peter's and Beth's passing.

The world is a sadder place for Neil's passing.

Another lawyer remembers Dad in this way:

I first met Neil in 1980 when I commenced my first job as a solicitor at Cannan and Peterson. Unlike many senior practitioners who seemed to delight in making you feel small, incompetent or uncomfortable, Neil made you feel comfortable and valued. You were a person not just somebody churning out billable hours.

I want to acknowledge that our sister, Libby, has been a great support for Dad since mum died. She took on the lion's share of caring support for Dad's needs, and the rest of us "boys" are grateful for the time she put in – especially John and Andrew who live far away. I know she didn't see it as a chore but we are grateful. We are also grateful to Bronwyn, my younger brother, Peter's widow.

She has been a huge support and friend to Dad in the years since Peter's death and especially after Mum died.

Dad was going about his usual routine on Saturday morning, including going down the driveway to pick up the delivered Weekend Australian. He somehow lost his balance and fell heavily, causing a sudden and severe head injury. He succumbed to this injury some 18hrs later, without regaining consciousness.

A lot of us were lucky to have spent time with him in the week preceding his death, and our memories are of an interested, engaged, elderly patriarch enjoying life and each day as it came. He would have embraced more time but we as his family are grateful for the very long time he was in our lives.

Being the well-organised man he was, Dad wrote a memoir in the months after Mum died. Members of his family will now share with you Dad's own account of his life.

READER 1: JOHN DUTNEY

I have had a very privileged life. I have had a wonderful wife, Beth, who died in August 2018. We were married 66 years. Tomorrow would have been our 70th wedding anniversary. And we had 5 children, none of whom have gone off the rails, and who have all married and still have loving spouses. There were 4 boys, and then a girl at the end – a wonderful gift.

Our second son, Peter, who was very talented, and had an exceptional career as a barrister and judge, died suddenly at the age of 54. Our 4th son developed diabetes at the age of 9, and has had to give himself daily insulin injections ever since. He is now in his early 60s and enjoying good health. Our 6th grandchild, Andrew and Heather's son, Frazer, died about three weeks after birth. Apart from that we have had few dramas.

I have 8 surviving grandchildren, all good, and 10 great grandchildren. All are healthy.

So, as I said, I have had a privileged life.

I used to say that in relation to the way I and my sons fitted between the wars. I was too young to be in the 2nd World War. I was 16 when it ended. And my boys were too young for the Vietnam War. Of course, my grandson, Jack, has

chosen the life of an officer in the British Army. I pray for his safety and happiness.

When our 4th son was born, our doctor in Charleville, Harry Fox, sent us a card with a reference to Psalm 127:4,5. I looked it up and it says: "Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the sons of one's youth. Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them."

But in my experience, happier still is the man, and woman, who have a daughter as well. Beth and I have been very well looked after by our daughter Libby, our youngest child, and she is still looking after me very well.

Still on the theme of how privileged I have been, I have only had 4 homes in my life:

For the first 21 years I lived in my parents' home at 498 Old Cleveland Road, Camp Hill.

Then Beth and I lived in the same house in Charleville for 14 years. Our 5 children were all born in Charleville.

Then we came back to Brisbane and lived at Burns Road Toowong for 19 years, and then, in our retirement, home was at Ellerslie Crescent, Taringa, only about 3 blocks from where we were at Toowong, but on the other side of the Toowong Creek, for the last 37 years.

I intend if I can stay there until I die

READER 2: ANDREW DUTNEY

What sort of person am I? Well, I am a cautious person, not very adventurous. For the first 5 years of my life I was an only child. My sister Margaret was born when I was 5. My other sister Lorraine was born 11 years after that. My company was mainly feminine. Apart from my mother, there was a girl next door, Joyce Smith, about a year older than me. She taught me to sing. It was quite a revelation to me to find I could sing popular songs in tune. Though I must have been able to sing before that, because I remember my mother taught me to sing "Daisy, Daisy, give me an answer do" for my grandfather at quite a young age. Joyce next door also taught me skipping and hopscotch, and led me in climbing over the framework of houses being built across the street at the back. Apart from Joyce, I had female cousins, who taught me simple card games.

It was quite a shock to go to Coorparoo State School, and meet the rough boys from the Queen Alexandra Home for Children, which was next door to the school. I remember seeing a group of boys playing at grabbing one another's testicles. I steered well away from them. They all came to school bare-foot. So I went to school bare-foot to fit in. They only had to go next door to school. I had a few blocks to walk, down Camp Hill along Old Cleveland Road, across Bennett's Road, and then up the next hill to the school. I remember getting my feet burnt on the bitumen in the summer, although I could mostly keep to the dirt part of the road. And I could go through the paddocks off the road, and along the drains (and through some large pipes), which was quite an adventure for me.

I had other interests outside school. My parents took me to the Methodist Sunday School at Annerley every Sunday afternoon. My grandfather (my mother's father) was the superintendent of the Sunday School, but he died before I graduated to the big Sunday School. My father's parents had died before I was born. So for most of my childhood I only had one grandparent, my mother's mother – another female influence.

My mother had 6 brothers. They were kind to me, but I did not have a great deal to do with them.

After my grandfather died, my parents arranged for me to go to the Methodist Sunday School at Camp Hill, which was within walking distance of our home. There I became quite heavily involved, especially with the Youth Choir. I developed a lifelong love of the church music. I also started to develop what became a lifelong love of the Bible. I attended "Christian Endeavour" where I learnt to pray ex tempore. I also for a time belonged to the "Methodist Order of Knights" and got a taste of ceremony and ritual, which I quite liked.

I also joined the Cubs, which helped my development. I did graduate from the Cubs to the Scouts, but the Pacific war had started, and there were no male Scout Masters, so no more camps, or swimming in the nude in the local creek. (This creek was at Seven Hills – Tea-tree Gully – and is now, no doubt, covered with houses.)

When I was little, our house at Camp Hill, on Old Cleveland Road, half way up the hill, was the last house out of town. It adjoined a dairy which was on the top of Camp Hill. I remember climbing our side fence and picking my way through the bindii [bindy-eye] to the dairy to get a billy can of warm milk.

But though our house was on the edge of the fields, it still had a tram line running right past the house, terminating at the top of Camp Hill. Later on, when I started work in town, I could sit at our kitchen window looking up the road, and see when there was a tram coming. I could then race down the steps, down the driveway, and across the road, to catch the tram at the stop just past our house. So my first experience with public transport was very positive.

READER 3: SAM DUTNEY

When the Pacific war started, and especially after Singapore fell in February 1942, everything changed. But maybe it changed for me the year before, in 1941. I was in year 6 of Primary School. The next year, year 7 was the last year of Primary School, and the year one sat for the State Scholarship examination. Early in my grade 6 year I was put up to year 7. I had to do 2 years work in one year, and work hard to get a Scholarship, because otherwise I knew I would not be going on to secondary school. That is when I learnt to study, and study hard, and to pass exams. I continued with that all through secondary school and university. Learning to study and pass exams changed my life.

But passing the Scholarship exam was the first hurdle. I had learnt fretwork the previous year, at the prompting of my then teacher, Mr Simpson. I used that to cut out little rectangles of 3-ply with a year on one side and an historical event on the other. I kept testing myself, making a game of it. That is how I learnt history dates. In geography my teacher, Mr Lather, played the odds. He worked out that it was time for the Scholarship Geography paper to be based on India, so he taught us India, and did not worry about what I had missed in 5th Grade. I never learnt at school anything about the USA, or the rest of America, or Africa. Fortunately his gamble paid off.

Only 3 people in our class passed the Scholarship exam. I was one of them. At that time, with the Japanese at the door, and talk of the “Brisbane line”, and the influx of American troops, the government decreed that you had to attend the nearest secondary school. Otherwise, I would probably have gone to Brisbane Grammar School, where my father went, or maybe State High, where my mother went. But the nearest secondary school was Churchie (the Church of England Grammar School) in East Brisbane, so I went there. It was really much better for me than Brisbane Grammar. It was only 15 minutes away by push bike. And the School made up the short-fall of my Government scholarship so that my parents did not pay any fees.

I enjoyed my 4 years at Churchie – 1942 to 1945. I enjoyed the school work. I did not make any close friends. I was a “3 o’clock day boy” as the boarders scornfully called us. I rode to and from school on my pushbike on my own. In the lunch hour I spent a lot of time at the open-air gym, so much so that I finished up as Captain of Gymnastics in my last year. I avoided football. I did not play any sports. I even avoided the annual swim around the “pocket” of the Norman Creek, which was supposed to be compulsory. I just did not turn up. I did not join the Army Cadets – until I was persuaded to do this in my second last year, and then was made a Cadet Lieutenant for my final year. In retrospect I think the headmaster, Canon Morris, had his eye on me and was determined to bring out some leadership qualities in me.

I was after an Open Scholarship to the University. The Head told me that if I failed to win one, or even if I won one, I should come back to school for another year, and they would waive all fees. I did win an Open Scholarship, and did not go back to school for another year. The school won 6 Open Scholarships that year, out of the 20 which the Government offered state wide.

One of my experiences as a Cadet Lieutenant was in about June of my final year. I was not actually entitled to be a Cadet Lieutenant because I was less than 16 years old. So I was lucky to have this experience. The Cadet Lieutenants went on a two week camp at Seymour in Victoria, to the army camp there, for training. We went there by train. It was my first ever train trip. There were 4 of us to a compartment. We drew straws to see where we would sleep. The winner slept on the bench seat, the next on the floor of the compartment, the next on the wire luggage rack above the bench seat, and the last had to leave the compartment and find his own space, perhaps on the floor at the end of the carriage. I drew the luggage rack. It wasn’t very comfortable.

It was freezing at the camp, sleeping in tents, and getting up before sunrise for parade. We had to march everywhere in quick time – I think it was 140 paces a minute instead of 120. But we were allowed to go into the Officers’ Mess in the evening where there was a blazing wood fire.

After the camp, we were allowed to go to Melbourne instead of straight home if we had friends or family in Melbourne where we could stay. I went there – to Melbourne, although I didn’t have friends or family there, and slept in a Salvation Army Men’s Shelter.

Then I went to Sydney, where my father was stationed as an Army Captain. He took me to the officers' mess there and introduced me to his commanding officer. I felt very important.

READER 4: BILL BINGLEY

Churchie was a church school (and still is of course). Apart from the effect of this on the culture, through the influence of the Head and the teachers, the only outwardly church things they did was to have a Chapel service every morning at 8.30, before school started. The Head was a low church Anglican priest (although he was an honorary canon of St John's Cathedral) so the service did not have any "smells and bells" – just set prayers, hymns, and bible readings, but no sermon as far as I can remember – at least it would have been very short.

I remember how the organist Rev Evan Wetherill, seemed to play "Jesu, Joy of man's desiring" as an introit before the service every morning. Robert Boughen [Bro-wen] (who was at school a year behind me) relieved him at the organ a few times. Robert Boughen of course became a well-known Brisbane organist.] Once a year the Bishop visited, and we sang up very lustily for him. And once a year we had a reading from Isaiah 40, read by the Head, with the passage "They shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint". That caused a thrill, because it contained the school's motto, "On eagles' wings" Alis Aquilae. In our last year at school, each of us, whether we were Anglican or not, had a private, one-to-one interview with the Bishop – something that wouldn't happen these days.

The other Christian education we had at the school was in our first year when the Head took us for one lesson a week reading round the class the "Little Bible" which consisted of extracts from the Bible, in the order they appear in the bible. It took the whole year to read it through. We read in order round the class, so that if you did not want to pay attention, all you had to do was to watch out when it was coming near your turn, and then find your place. There was no trouble with discipline, as it was the Headmaster taking the class. I sometimes turned to the critical notes at the end of the book and read them, instead of following closely the reading of the text. It was my first introduction to modern biblical criticism.

That was the extent of the Christian education in the school.

I thought what Churchie was doing in my time was quite good, at least for me. But when our own boys were born and we were booking them into secondary

school as boarders, I thought they might be uncomfortable with the Anglican ambiance, particularly as boarders, so I booked them into BBC.

READER 5: ANNA OSBORNE

The Christian education at Churchie, as I have described it, was the only contact with Christianity I had during my years there. I had ceased to attend the Methodist Sunday School at Camp Hill. I continued to be out of contact with the church throughout my university education, except for attending the weekly meetings of the SCM (Student Christian Movement) during my first year at University and also their Easter camp. I remember at the meetings we read through Dorothy Sayers' radio play "Man Born to be King". And at the Easter Camp I bought CS Lewis' "Screwtape Letters".

When I went to enrol in Law at the beginning of term in 1946, the Dean of the Law School himself was taking enrolments, Professor Harrison. This was at Old Government House at the bottom of George Street. That was where the Law School was situated, for the whole of my time at the Law School. It was only after 1949 that it shifted to the new St Lucia campus. Professor Harrison tried to persuade me to do Arts/Law, but I wanted to do Law straight, because I feared that my scholarship would only cover one degree. It was for that reason I had complied with the extra requirements for a straight Law degree. These included a pass in Logic, which was not offered at Churchie. I had gone into the city every Saturday morning to take lessons in Logic, with another student from Churchie, Julian Philp.

I had an enjoyable first year at University, very relaxed, but at the end of that year I took Articles of Clerkship with King and Gill, Solicitors for 3 years, and for the next 3 years did the full-time law degree, and worked supposedly full-time for King and Gill. I had no time for going to church, or a social life, although I did find time to play golf on Saturday afternoon at Oxley Golf Club, where my father and I had taken up golf together the previous year, after his return from the war.

When I say I worked supposedly full-time for King and Gill, they were very good in allowing me to take time off for lectures, and I also did some looking up of cases during working hours in the office. There were lectures some nights at 5 pm, and I would leave the office at the corner of Queen and George Streets, at about 4.50 pm, to race down George Street to the lecture. There were also lectures at 8 am in the city, in the chambers of young barristers. I attended lectures by a number of barristers who became judges – including Moss Hanger,

Bert Mack and Wally Campbell, each of whom became Chief Justice of the Qld Supreme Court, and Bill Gibbs, who became Chief Justice of the High Court of Australia.

The firm King & Gill, with whom I did my articles, was very neatly organised. There were 4 partners. They were Mr King Senior and his son Steve King, and Mr Gill Senior and his son Connal Gill. Mr Gill Senior was a pipe smoker, and his room was always full of pipe smoke, and he trailed pipe smoke wherever he went in the office. His son Steve King was a chain smoker. Whenever he picked up the phone, he automatically lit another cigarette. So his room was full of cigarette smoke. Different times!

I finished my law degree, and my articles, at the end of 1949. The next year, 1950, was the year I met my wife Beth. I can divide up the rest of my life as follows:

1950 – the year I courted Beth

1951 the year I lived as a bachelor in Charleville preparing to marry Beth

1952 -1965 the years in Charleville with Beth, during which our 5 children were born (14 years)

1966 - 1985 the years at Burns Road, Toowong, where the children grew up (19 years)

1985-2018 the years at Ellerslie Crescent, Taringa – our retirement years (33 years)

2018-2022 the years I lived after Beth died (3 and ½ years)

READER 1: JOHN DUTNEY

The year 1950 was a year of relaxation for me. I had finished my law degree. I was receiving a good wage (8 pounds per week instead of 1 pound 10 shillings.) I was looking for a girlfriend

I met Beth at Surfers Paradise at a party on the night of Good Friday, 7 April 1950. I gate crashed the party, at the prompting of my young sister Margaret, who was invited. I was asked to leave, but was rescued by other people there – probably my sister, and a friend of Beth's whom I knew slightly, who then introduced me to Beth. After the party Beth and I went driving and parking, in my mother's car, with my sister and her boyfriend in the back seat, and I delivered Beth to the house where she was staying with her friends about 5 am.

About 11 am I was at the beach at Surfers Paradise, under an umbrella with my parents and Margaret, my sister. I noticed a group of girls under an umbrella not far away. I went over and said to one of the girls: "Are you the girl I was with last night?" It was Beth. That could have ended our relationship before it had really begun. But it did not, thanks to Beth.

Over the next 8 months I took Beth out at least twice each week. We went to see all the Gilbert and Sullivan light operas at Her Majesty's Theatre, we went to all the balls at Cloudland, we went to private dances organised by Beth and her friends at the RSL Hall at New Farm and the O'Connor Boathouse in the City, we went for picnics to Mount Glorious and other places round Brisbane, and day trips to the Gold Coast – anything to keep her from getting caught up with some other boy. I proposed to her towards the end of the year. She was doubtful. She was 19. I spoke to her father, and he said it would have to be a long engagement. I agreed. I had in mind a few months. I think he had in mind a few years. Beth's mother said I would have to be able to buy a house for her to live in.

After Beth accepted my proposal, I looked round at my future, work wise. I thought the quickest way to get established would be to go into the country. John Stephenson was an established solicitor at Charleville. He used King and Gill as his town agents in Brisbane, so I had met him. He needed an assistant solicitor. The wool boom had started with the Korean War, and his business had expanded with the good fortunes of the graziers around Charleville. He offered me a partnership, if we suited one another, after a 3 months trial period. I accepted. And at the beginning of April 1951 I took the train to Charleville. I was 21 years old.

I had never been west of Toowoomba, or north of Bundaberg. This was only the 2nd train ride of my life. The first one had been to Sydney during the war. The train ride to Charleville took over 24 hours.

John Stephenson met me at the train station at Charleville. He took me to my accommodation at Corones Hotel. He introduced me to the hotelkeeper, Poppa Corones, a legendary figure. Poppa said "Why, he's only a boy." John Stephenson said "We all have to start that way, you know."

Poppa said to John "I have something for you. Wait there." He went away and came back with a bottle of Johnny Walker Red Label scotch whisky. I think these days that is regarded as a pretty ordinary whisky, but in those days apparently

it was pretty good. You were probably lucky to be able to get any scotch whisky at all. So Poppa presented it to John with pride, and John duly paid him for it.

After leaving my luggage at the hotel, John showed me the office, and the town, and his home, and the golf course and then took me back to the hotel for dinner. That is where I was going to stay for the first few days.

I wrote in my letter to Beth that night:

It is more like living in the “big smoke” staying in this hotel than at home, because it is in the middle of town, and the room I am in is just off the veranda overlooking Wills Street, one of the two main streets.

Early tonight there was a street church service over the road. At about 11 o’clock I heard the National anthem being played in the picture theatre. Shortly before I heard a drunk being sick; and a little while ago I heard screams down the passage as if a girl were being [assaulted]. So there is plenty of life.

I wrote to Beth 2 or 3 days a week, and she wrote to me almost daily. This went on for almost 12 months. There were no emails in those days, no mobile phones, air services from Brisbane twice a week, and a passenger train twice a week.

READER 2: ANDREW DUTNEY

There was a hiccup in the middle however. Beth wrote that she was thinking of going overseas with friends for an extended holiday. I became very upset. I wrote to her that if she went overseas she probably would not return, or would return with another boyfriend, and it would be the end for us. In the end she decided not to go. One of her girl friends did meet someone overseas and stayed there. Beth did not get overseas until 25 years later, in 1977, when we both went overseas for the first time, together. After that we had 30 overseas trips, before we got too old and frail.

I went down to Brisbane in September 1951 to see Beth, and to drive back John’s new car, a Holden. This was a great vote of confidence, in my mind. That was when new cars had to be carefully run in. And I would be driving over dirt and gravel roads from Dalby west. I went to Brisbane, cemented my relationship with Beth, and brought the new car safely to Charleville.

In Charleville, I was living in a rented room, having all my meals at a one star hotel, the Telegraph. I wasn’t able to stay at Coronet after the first few days. They weren’t taking permanents. I wasn’t enjoying life that much. I would

sometimes walk at night, past houses with friendly lights inside, and wish I had a home there, so Beth and I could get married.

One of John Stephenson's friends, Dr Harry Fox and his wife Jeannette, had taken me under their wing. They often had young bachelors for dinner, once a week or more often. We used to have a sing-song round the piano after dinner.

I also attended the Presbyterian Church on Sunday nights, where there was a youth group. And I played golf on Sunday morning, at the 9 hole course, as it was then, with oiled sand greens, and sandy dirt fairways (with tufts of grass), and teeing grounds consisting of baked earth as hard as cement, so you used a piece of hose as a tee.

Housing was short in Charleville, as well as office space. But eventually John found me a house for sale. It was a very basic house. You know the sort of house a child might draw – a square box, on high stumps, with a high-pitched roof, and stairs in the middle of the front.

It also had stairs in the middle of the back, with a passage between them, and rooms on either side. It had a living room and a kitchen on the right-hand side, and on the left hand side a small veranda, a bedroom behind that, and then behind that a very small bathroom and a very small second bedroom. The bathroom had a bath, but no room for a hand basin, and the second bedroom had a single bed, but no room for a dressing table or wardrobe. And that was it.

The house had ribs on the outside. That is, the vertical supports and studs were not covered on the outside. They were covered on the inside with wood planks, so these served as the outside wall as well. In other words, it was a single wall house – not very good at keeping out the heat in summer or the cold in winter.

But it was a house. John arranged for a loan from the National Bank, and he guaranteed the loan, which was another vote of confidence.

So Beth and I could at last get married.

Beth wrote and asked what colour the walls were, so she could buy curtains. I puzzled over them. I am not very good with colours. I told her they were battleship grey. In fact, as she discovered after she came out and saw for herself, after we were married, they were different pastel shades, which had faded.

After I paid for the house I slept in it, and let the second bedroom to another bachelor, but we did not have any meals in the house. I continued to have all my meals at the Telegraph Hotel. It was just a place to sleep.

READER 3: SAM DUTNEY

We were married at the Churchie chapel in Brisbane on 17 April 1952, and I borrowed my mother's little Ford Anglia car to honeymoon in the northern rivers of NSW. We had our honeymoon night at the Surfers Paradise Hotel, where we had the bridal suite. The lights on the car failed on the drive down to Surfers, so I drove the last part without lights. At the hotel, there were twin beds. This was in the honeymoon suite! I sat on one of the beds and it collapsed. So we spent the rest of the night in a single bed. [We suspected that Beth's "friends" at the bank, where she worked, had a hand in it. The accommodation was booked through the bank.]

We drove as far south as Grafton. This is after spending a couple of weeks at Brunswick Heads Hotel. On the way into Grafton the engine started to cough. I was running out of money by then. It was going to cost 5 shillings to garage the car at the hotel there. So I took it to a motor mechanic and arranged for him to clean the carburettor for 5 shillings, and keep the car overnight.

The next morning we were heading west up the range to Glen Innes, on the way home via the New England Highway. I understood the road up to Glen Innes was not very good. I saw a sign saying "Stock route" and thought – "a stock route can be along a road" - so I drove down the road and got bogged. A kind man with a tractor pulled us out.

But the engine performed alright. My gamble about the trouble with the engine being the carburettor had paid off. I knew very little about engines, but the car had previously had trouble which turned out to be dirt in the carburettor. So it was an informed gamble.

We returned the car to my mother in Brisbane, and took the train out to Charleville. We were met by Mark Bracewell, one of the bachelors who used to have dinner at Dr and Mrs Fox's. I think he was the engineer for the Irrigation Department.

He took us in his utility to our new home. I invited him in for a cup of tea. He accepted, but then I found that we had no way of heating water, except by lighting the wood stove in the kitchen. And we had no chopped wood. So Mark went and chopped some wood in the back yard, and lit the fire, and eventually we had our cup of tea. Mark had a naturally ironic manner, and I imagine that it was genuinely ironic that day.

The reason we could not boil water in an electric jug was that there was Direct Current electricity in Charleville, not alternating current – DC and not AC - and the normal appliances only run on AC. So we couldn't have a normal electric refrigerator, or electric stove, or electric jug, or electric toaster.

We had hot water, direct from the Charleville bore – too hot to bathe in. We had to fill the bath with hot water in the morning, and allow it to cool so that we could have a bath in the evening. Beth and I and the children all used the same water.

The water had a sulphuric smell, which you got used to after a while. It also had a distinctive taste. We used to put a container of water in the frig, and drink it after it had cooled down.

You got used to the taste. In later years, when we took our sons to Brisbane on holidays, we had to take lots of Charleville water with us, as they thought the Brisbane water was undrinkable.

We had a kerosene refrigerator. It was not very efficient. It would not freeze anything in summer. So you couldn't keep ice cream.

You could buy a wireless that would work with DC power but you could only get the local radio station, 4VL, and it only played country and western music. So we got used to country and western music.

I bought the house fully furnished. This included the lounge suite (under the cushions of which Beth found chop bones). And it included tools, carpentry and garden tools, some of which I still have. I haven't used them much.

READER 4: BILL BINGLEY

As I have said, we had 14 years of married life at Charleville, and our 5 children were all born there.

Materially, things gradually improved. We made extensions to the house. The town electricity was changed to AC. We got a slow combustion wood fire for the living room, and an air conditioner for the summer.

We were both very involved in the Presbyterian Church at Charleville. I made a serious commitment to the faith following the baptism of our second son Peter. The promise to "bring him up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and the ways of the church of God" struck home to me. I started to teach Sunday School. I became an elder, and before long found myself the Session Clerk. I

thought of training to be a minister, but our minister dissuaded me, telling me that the church also needed committed laymen. I think I was easily dissuaded. I had a wife and 2 children to support at that stage – soon to be 3.

I kept my options open by studying New Testament Greek, and then classical Greek, and then ancient Hebrew. At that time it was a pre-requisite to studying Theology at the University of Queensland to have a Senior pass in classical Greek and in ancient Hebrew. I did get a senior pass eventually in both those languages, and I got a degree in theology at the University of Queensland, but I never became a minister.

I did some lay preaching in Charleville, particularly when there was a vacancy – when a minister had left and we were waiting for another to be appointed. I even took several funerals during those vacancies, two of them in the Church, followed by a procession to the cemetery, and one on a property outside Charleville.

But I decided that I did not have the gifts and graces to be a minister. As it happened, my third son, Andrew, did become a minister and, ultimately, the Principal of a theological college and the President of the Uniting Church in Australia. In recent months we have been reading and discussing theology together.

After I had been in Charleville for 10 years, John Stephenson decided to go to Brisbane. His first intention was to set up an office in Brisbane as part of the firm of Stephenson and Dutney, but when his intentions became known, Cannan & Peterson, a well-known Brisbane firm with a strong rural practice, offered him a partnership. He accepted, and told me that he would try to get me into Cannan & Peterson too at the right time.

So John left Charleville, and I had a little under 5 years after that as a sole practitioner in Charleville. It was a comfortable life. I was well integrated into the community. I was in Rotary and served a term as President. I was Session Clerk of the Presbyterian Church. I was chairman of the Fire Brigade Board. I was a member of the Masonic Lodge, and at the time I left I was Senior Warden, about to be installed as Master of the lodge.

I was very comfortable in Charleville, but when the time came to send our eldest son away to boarding school at BCC, Beth and I realised that we did not want to part with him (or our other sons) at the age of 12 and, on a practical note, I did

not see myself being able to pay the school boarding fees for 5 children. So we decided it was time to go back to Brisbane.

READER 5: ANNA OSBORNE

I answered an ad for a position as Solicitor to the University of Queensland, and had an interview with the Dean of the Faculty of Law and another member of the Law Faculty staff. They told me that the position had been promised to someone already. But they said that if I applied for a position as a Senior Lecturer in the Law Faculty I would most likely get it. Fortunately before I went any further an offer was made by Cannan & Peterson of a partnership with them.

So I took up a partnership with Cannan & Peterson in November 1965.

At that time there were I think 8 partners, but it was one of the more prominent firms in Brisbane, and reasonably long established. It was also a Protestant firm. The division between Catholics and Protestants was starting to break down, but at that stage there were still "Catholic firms", such as Thynne & Macarthy and O'Shea Corser & Wadley, and "Protestant firms" such as Cannan & Peterson and McCullough & Robertson.

Although I was now a partner in one of the leading Brisbane legal firms, I was not well off. I was buying my share of the partnership out of profits, and I had had to walk away from my practice in Charleville (which I had bought from John Stephenson out of profits) because there were no buyers for it. I was also unable to sell my house in Charleville.

So I was busy trying to find my place in the firm. And Beth was busy looking after 5 young children, and trying to feed and clothe them as economically as possible. She went out to Moggill to buy eggs in bulk from the producer and finished up buying cracked eggs from Don Greer on a regular basis for many years.

Beth also bought cases of fruit and vegetables from the markets, and her brother, Sam, who was a meat buyer, bought meat for her in bulk, a whole side of beef, or a whole lamb.

Our children were never given soft drinks. They drank water, or milk. We never went to a restaurant. Beth made their lunches, and made my lunch too.

Beth and I felt that the Toowong community offered us everything growing children could possibly need. As country kids they still enjoyed open spaces. Today's Perrin Park at the end of Burns Road where our home was, was a horse paddock. It belonged to Miss Perrin, who lived in Holmes Street, and kept horses

there. It had Toowong Creek running through it. It was a marvellous place to catch “guppies” – a magnet for small boys after school.

They were able to walk to school. Mark told Beth once it was 500 paces to the BBC school gate from our gate. The younger ones walked to Taringa State School.

Pattersons sawmill was another treasure. The boys made numerous trips with a sugar bag to collect the “off cuts” which they dragged home up High Street, a boy hanging onto each corner of the bag. What was Pattersons sawmill is where the Toowong Village tower and shopping centre are now built.

They would turn the “cut offs” into weird and wonderful objects on the workbench under the house.

Their friends often came over to play after school and they would go to their friends’ homes at other times.

It was a general decision with parents that 5 pm was the time to go home or be collected. Most kids had a parent at home in those days.

Beth was very busy with the children’s school activities, and with community activities, such as Meals on Wheels. And she chaired the board of the Jahjumbeen Occasional Child Care for many years, from its inception until it was handed over to Wesley Mission Queensland. Beth hosted 5 Rotary Exchange students, two girls from Japan, on different occasions for 4 months each, one boy from Sweden, one boy from South Africa, and a girl from Thailand. She was also very good at befriending young wives of international students who turned up at our church at Toowong, inviting them and their husbands home for meals, and making friends of them. She also participated in classes for international students learning English as a second language.

On top of this, once the children were a bit older, Beth studied at Kelvin Grove for the Adult Matriculation, and then did a law degree. This was to some extent an insurance, in case I died. She would be able to obtain employment. Tony Peterson suggested after she obtained her law degree that she take articles with Cannan & Peterson, and so become qualified as a solicitor, but by that stage it had become irrelevant. The children were now supporting themselves, or on the verge of doing so.

As for me, as well as doing my work, I studied for a Bachelor of Divinity at UQ, served on numerous church committees, and played golf. I also got very involved in Rotary.

Our children married, gave us 9 grandchildren, and then another 10 great grandchildren.

Over the last 40 years we did a lot of travelling. In all we had about 30 overseas trips.

Our last overseas trip was in 2009. It was our first and only cruise.

We made good use of credits we bought in WorldMark, a time share trust, for holidays mainly in Australia, but also overseas, in New Zealand and the Lake District in the UK.

We also at an earlier stage went on all the coach tours organised by Jim Gibson for the Indooroopilly Uniting Church. These were through the outback of Australia – three weeks at a time, sleeping in two-man tents.

READER: MARK DUTNEY

I have had permanent atrial fibrillation since October 2017. It makes me short of breath at the least exertion and makes me unable to stand for any length of time. I was confined to home looking after Beth for almost 2 years before she died. This was except when Libby or our friend Jennifer Wiltshire stayed with her, so I could go to church and to golf once a week. Since Beth died on 30 August 2018 I have tried to get out as much as I could, going to church and church activities, to golf once or twice a week, to the gym twice a week, and to Probus and Probus activities.

I find comfort in a story told by the journalist Greg Sheridan in his book “God is good for you”. I will finish with this. He writes about Mary Easson, a politician who served a term as a Labor member in the last Keating government. She was at death’s door, but came back, and had a long period of recovery. I quote from the book: “She coped with the process of recovery partly by giving herself a purpose outside herself: [She said] ‘I tried to say to myself: if anyone comes into my room today – be it a cleaner or a nurse or anyone – I will try to make their day better. You can feel sorry for yourself. I find if I get to the point of saying: how can I help others? I cope better myself and it’s what God requires of you anyway.’ Then Mary looked straight at me and said: ‘What is required from you,

man, is simply this – act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with your God.' That is the famous passage from the Book of Micah in the Old Testament."

I think that is comforting for anyone seeking to serve God, but whose age or state of health limits what they can do.

That is an elegant summary of the life and character of Neil Dutney. He acted justly. He loved tenderly. And he walked humbly with his God throughout his long a fruitful life.