



January 31, 1963
Glenn Sheehan's baptism
Sister Cecile James, Glenn Sheehan and Sister Anne Milburn



Feb 1, 1963

Wow - what didn't happen today?! Glenn's parents are "wild" about his baptism. When he told them, his mother ripped off his shirt, threw a chair at him and raved on for over 1 1/2 hours. She even threw water on him to imitate a baptism. If she only knew. Poor Glenn, but he's still happy to be a Mormon. The Elders went to his home tonight to talk to his parents, so things are starting to calm down. Sis. Michaelis has been real ill since her baptism, Glenn's mother is upset, Ann's in the hospital after taking arsenic, and Sister Michaelis is in bed three days flat on her back - ooohhh!

Feb 6, 1963

What a day. It started off by Elder Newbold, Sessions, Sister Johnson and I going to talk to Mrs. Sheehan. She really does think that Sister Milburn and I are the scum of the earth. Oh well, you can't win them all! She didn't say much - neither did she listen much. She feels sorry for us and Glenn and she pities us. She still has her devoted friends praying for Glenn. As a matter of fact, Sister Bolton and Sister Heywood gave a first discussion today to a lady who was praying for Glenn. Their troubles aren't anything compared to Judith Trevelyan's. How we ever get so involved in such troubles I'll never know - and all this that we might gain experience. Sister Broderick and I went to speak to her mother today and her mother just cried and told us the whole (ugly) story. I feel so blessed for what I have.



Sister Judean Johnson, Newbold, Len Balchin
(baptized February 24, 1963), Blair, James

I got a new companion on February 4. It was quite sudden, but the shift to Perth for Sister Milburn was the best thing for her and John. She has three months left on her mission so this will be a good time for both of them to think about the future. It would be hard for her to be a dedicated missionary in this area with John feeling the way he does. She's such a great gal and we've had some choice experiences together. I really love her - we'll be good friends forever.

My new companion is Sister Judy Johnson from Salt Lake. She's a shorty, but they say the best things come in small packages. I hope our companionship will be fruitful.

February 7, 1963

Had a good unusual day - especially tonight as we gave a first discussion to Hugo Korpse (Latvian) and Brother Balodis translated for us. Actually, it was just a big thrill to be able to give him the discussion in this manner. There're a lot of things which he doesn't believe yet but I think things will change when he reads and studies the Book of Mormon.

February 8, 1963

A most wonderful experience tonight. We went to pick up Karleen (Michaelis) to baptize her, and Kathryn (Michaelis) was ready to become a Mormon as well. They're both just wonderful young gals.

Kathryn truly has a testimony - she'll be changing from a Catholic school to a public school this next week, but she still has the job of facing the Mother Superior on Monday as well. She was crying after her baptism because she was so humble. Honestly, I was humbled to tears myself - she's a sweetie alright. I've got so much love for this whole family. I just wonder why this happened to me - I'm so blessed and happy and contented. When I asked Kathryn how she's going to tell the Mother Superior, she said, "Well, I'm just going to go up to her and say, 'Mother, I'm not going to be in this school any longer because I'm a Mormon now, not a Catholic, and I'm proud of it!!'" What a gal this one is.



Jerry Michaelis



Rolf Michaelis



Cecile and Joan Michaelis



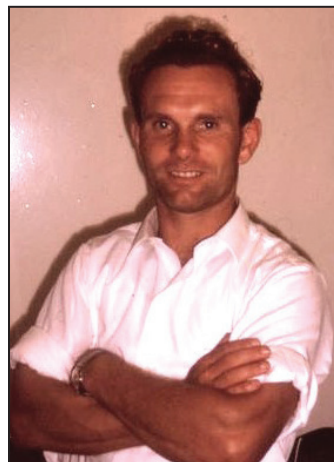
Jerry, Shirley, Karleen and Joan Michaelis



Shirley Michaelis and Elder Newbold



Kathryn Michaelis and other kids from the Branch



Kathryn Truss-Michaelis was baptized February 8, 1963 at Prospect Chapel by Elder Newbold and confirmed by Elder Belliston. Karleen Truss-Michaelis was baptized February 8, 1963 at Prospect Chapel by Elder Belliston and confirmed by Elder Newbold.

By the way, I got a telephone call from the folks yesterday. It made me so happy to hear their voices again. I love them so much! Life's great - in fact - IT'S JUST GREAT TO BE A MORMON!!!! Sister Johnson is a real good missionary - it's nice to be with an American again, but I miss my Australian "Milly" - I love her so much.

February 19, 1963

Well, it's only been 54 days since I've gotten a letter from Lawrence. However, I did get a card from him the day after Valentine's - one problem, however, his whole message was written in Maori and I can't read a word of it! Even Elder Josephs had a "go" at it, but can't figger the thing out.

Gosh, there've been a lot of things happen. Hugo is now on the Fourth Disussion and is living the Word of Wisdom. We are teaching Karleen and Kathryn and what a joy this is - those two girls are going to give so much joy and happiness to the church just with their sweet humble testimonies. We're also teaching Sister Gowin and Hans - we've got marvellous investigators - the past has never been better and the future's never looked brighter. My joy is just full of the love of the Lord and His goodness to me.



*President and Sister McConkie in Hobart
(picture taken by another missionary)*

We've just had another wonderful District Conference - President McConkie's done it again! His talks just get better every time. The theme of the Conference was The Book of Mormon - particularly dealing with Joseph Smith's statement, "I told the Brethren that the Book of Mormon was the most correct of any book on earth, and the keystone of our religion, and a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts, than by any other book." The talks were excellent and we were fortunate in having some outstanding investigators at it - really GOLDEN.

Yesterday, we had a very inspiring S/D meeting. Elder Young sang "I'll Walk With God," and of all people, I accompanied him on the piano. The whole meeting was outstanding. I've got so much to strive for.



Elder Abe Young



Elders: , Cowley, Hadley, Cottle, Clawson, Millar, Twede, Young



Elder Millar and Elder Twede



Sister Roberts



Cecile

I was sick for about three days last week. It finally caught up with me. However, we went out and worked every night, but I shouldn't have. I'm afraid it didn't do me any good. John Gowin fixed dinner for us one day last week. Sister Milburn had better sharpen up on her recipes (if it goes that way) - that guy can really cook! By the way, got a terrific letter from her today. She's real happy where she is and misses everyone. I really do love that girl.



Sister Anne Milburn

I've got a slight problem with Stuart Evans - but never mind. I've got my own ideas of what's happening there and I just pray I'll be able to combat the temptations which Satan places before me . . . why do these things happen to us when we're not looking for them??? We've been so totally focused on the work of the mission, and I plan to stay that way.

February 24, 1963

I just don't believe it - Judy Trevelyan finally made it in the water - one minute to midnight! We had a party for Kaye Bannister and Anne Trudgeon and everyone in both branches showed up - it was just terrific - a wonderful success! Afterwards, Judy decided that she'd do it! A large group attended the baptism and it was beautiful. Something else wonderful happened today. Len Balchin was baptized and believe it or not, it was a regular 4:00 Saturday baptism - we don't get many of those. Len's a terrific person and will be a tremendous asset to the branch. Boy, IT'S GREAT TO BE A MORMON!! Leonard Dean Balchin was baptized February 23rd, 1963 by Elder Blair and was confirmed by Elder Newbold in the Prospect Chapel. He was twenty-six years old. Judith Trevelyan was baptized February 23rd, 1963 by Elder Newbold and confirmed by Elder Blair also in the Prospect Chapel. She was seventeen years old



Christine and Desma Rhodes



Houston Family - Labor missionaries working on Elizabeth Chapel

Life is treating me so wonderful. I've just got to spend so much time on my knees tonight, thanking my Father in Heaven for my blessings - my heart is just full of the love I have for this Gospel. it's my daily prayer that I'll be worthy of all that I have.

I've received word through the grapevine that I'll be leaving Torrens this next Wednesday - it really just about breaks my heart to think I'll be leaving these wonderful people - I love Torrens so much

(Note: It is 2023, and Anne (Milburn) Parker continues to write short stories about her mission. This is her description of some of the same things I've recorded in my journal about our time together in Torrens, but it's nice to hear how another person saw it. I think we were pretty much on the "same page." Annes' story: *Now I have*

Sister Cecile James from Provo, Utah for a companion. We are almost the same age and she is the best. We are both willing to work hard and with lots of enthusiasm. We had a wonderful first week and I love her already. She turned out to be my favorite companion.



We are finding some fabulous young people. The Elders are doing everything they can to help us get a car again. They found us a little "Fiat" but it liked to stay out at night. At the end of each evening's work it broke down and we had to leave it somewhere, so that didn't work, but we can accomplish so much more with a car. We had a wonderful missionary meeting with President McConkie. We learn so much about the scriptures from him and he has so much faith in us and all we can do for the Lord, that we are always uplifted. Sister James has such a desire to serve God that it radiates to all around her. Our first baptism together was Peter Andrews from the Hostel. He was 16 years old and a great young man, but smoking 20 cigarettes a day. He gave them up for the good things of the gospel of Jesus Christ. We spoke to his parents and they were happy for him to be baptized. We were also teaching other young people, Bill Morris and Elizabeth, but they were not baptized at this time.

We have a car now and are teaching many people. One day we were fasting for them, so it was with humility that evening we were giving Mr. Nick Manos the 4th discussion. The power of the Holy Ghost was strong as Sister James and I bore testimony of the truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Mr. Manos felt it, too and knew he should be baptized. He surprised us by saying the only time possible for him was that night, so we contacted the Elders and had a wonderful baptism in the ocean! Sister James and I poured out our hearts in gratitude to our Heavenly Father for our feelings of sheer joy! Sister James has an excellent alto voice and I am a soprano, so the next day, as we drove around to our appointments, we were singing praises to God for His great goodness to us. Sister James loved to make up poems, songs and presentations. I caught the spirit of it as we did it together (see my missionary journal). Our lovely early Christmas presents were seeing three people baptized in December. Mrs. Paull and her son Martin accepted everything and treated us like queens. However, when we first spoke of baptism, Martin, a shy fellow, got a bit of a scared look on his face and rode off on his bicycle. Elder Newbold, our supervising elder, who was always a great help to us, talked to him and not long after, Martin and his Mum were baptized. And a few days later Brent Hanks was baptized. When Sister James gave him the First discussion, he said he didn't believe a word of it, however he still wanted us to continue teaching him and in time and through his prayers he found it was true and it was amazing how strong he became. His friends all teased him, "Brother Brent! Going to church!" but he came through and gained their respect. Our people just don't realize what we go through with them. How much we care about each one and worry about them and pray for them. About this time, President McConkie, who thought the lady missionaries did great work, gave us our own district named after his wife - the Amelia S. McConkie district with Sister Crystal Broderick as our supervising sister.)



Note: Before I leave my time in Torrens there was an event that somehow I didn't write about, but I do have pictures for. The Queen of England came to Adelaide on the 21st of February 1963. She came to visit the town of Elizabeth, which was named after her. We missionaries were at the roadside when she came from the airport and waved to her like everyone else was doing. Then we saw Br. Houston (included the photo of him and his family a

few pages back) who was the labor missionary (like my father) who was building the new LDS Chapel in Elizabeth!



21 February 1963 - Queen of England in Adelaide and Elizabeth



Sister Johnson, Elder Belliston, Elder Sessions



Elder Belliston and Me (Sister James)



Heywood, Dabb, Bolton, Johnson, Klein, Belliston, ?, Sessions, Holgate?






March 4, 1963

Last Sunday night was Kay Bannister's farewell - it was just a wonderful meeting. She's got such a strong desire to serve this mission. I got quite a shock after the service. Elder Twede informed me that I was leaving for Perth Wednesday to be the new Supervising Sister over there. I never in the world dreamed that Pres. McConkie would ever give me such a responsibility. I was quite scared at just the thought of it. By the way, that night Stuart Evans also received his call for a mission - he'll be leaving for his missionfield on April 3. It looks as if Torrens Branch is going to be well represented. I believe Desma Rhodes has also been asked the GOLDEN QUESTION.


I was more than excited about these Farewells. The first program is Stuart Evans, who was a constant support in all of our missionary work in Torrens. He gave us rides, cooked us meals, fellowshipped all of our investigators - was a total support.

<p>Farewell Testimonial given in honour of</p> <p>Elder Stuart W. Evans Son of Mr. and Mrs. H. G. Evans of Melbourne</p> <p>to be held in</p> <p>TORRENS BRANCH HALL 10 Jervois Street, Torrensville</p> <p>Prior to his departure on</p> <p>Wednesday, 3rd April, to serve in the Southern Australian Mission</p> <p>SUNDAY, 24th MARCH, 1963 5.30 P.M.</p>	 <p>ELDER STUART W. EVANS</p>	<p>Programme</p> <p>Prelude Music Constance Nicholl Opening Hymn High on a Mountain Top Invocation Bill Walker Sacrament Hymn O God, the Eternal Father Sacrament Speaker Thea Millikan Speaker Victor Scriven Speaker Barbara Hobby Hymn Though in the Outward Church Below Speaker President Ron Barrett Speaker Elder Hal Belliston Speaker George Ferguson Choir Selection God of Our Fathers, Who's Almighty Hand Remarks by Missionary Stuart W. Evans Closing Hymn Come Follow Me Benediction Arthur Phillips Postlude Music Constance Nicholl</p> <p>Voluntary Contribution</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Stuart</i></p>
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*Peter James, Who's our you women
to love people the way you do?
You are just the most loving person
I have ever met. I shall never forget*

*The love you left with the wonderful
little beams of your kindness. May
our heavenly Father bless you for your
love of His greatest principle to the
extent that you do.
My love will be with you always*

The second is a farewell that took place in our ward in Provo, Utah on March 10, 1963. Johnny Ashby was a close friend to the James Family. (My brother Tom spoke at his farewell), named his son, Johnny, after him, and I named my son, Spencer John, after him and Johnny James. And my son Spencer, named his son Myles John. The name of this good man, Johnny Ashby, carries on. I never followed his life after the missionfield, but I know he married well, became a Mission President, has kept in touch with Tom, and I'm sure he's never known that there was a young teen-age girl in high school who had a terrific crush on him!

<p>A FAREWELL TESTIMONIAL given in honor of</p> <p>ELDER JOHN HOWARD ASHBY Son of Mr. and Mrs. George Ashby</p> <p>who has been called to serve in the</p> <p>Eastern States Mission of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints</p> <p>to be held</p> <p>Sunday, March 10, 1963 at 6:30 p.m.</p> <p>in the</p> <p>East Sharon Stake House South Wing 1600 North 900 East Provo, Utah</p>	<p>PROGRAM</p> <p>Prelude Mrs. Gus Larson Opening Hymn Congregation "Prayer is the Soul's Sincere Desire" No. 220 Invocation Ray Ashby Sacrament Hymn Congregation "I Know That My Redeemer Lives" No. 95 Sacrament Service Aaronic Priesthood Talk Tom James Talk Kelly Ashby Vocal Solo Fred Webb Talk Mother of Missionary Talk Father of Missionary Response Missionary Remarks Bishop Bowden Closing Hymn Congregation "Lord, Dismiss Us With Thy Blessings" No. 105 Benediction Wes Potter</p>	 <p>ELDER JOHN HOWARD ASHBY</p>
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Journal: March 4, 1963 (continued)

On Monday I had a most wonderful experience at our S/D meeting. Sister Broderick asked me to speak and afterwards the sisters sang, "God Be With You Til We Meet Again" - I was okay clear up until the last verse and then Sis. B and I looked at each other and that was it for both of us - the tears came. Afterwards, I had a meeting with Sister B and she went over all the mechanics of beng a Supervising Sister. Then we knelt in a word of prayer together - the Spirit of the Holy Ghost seemed to be with us so strongly. I'm so grateful to that wonderful girl. I consider her to be one of my choicest friends and sisters in the Gospel.



(Middle) Jerry Michaelis, (Right) Glenn Sheehan

After a lot of "good-byes," my plane left at 3:00 on Wednesday. When I got to the airport there were so many people. Glenn and Bob gave me a big box of candy and Stuart gave me 26 beautiful red carnations. I cried so much. These people in Torrens are so very wonderful. I'll never be able to repay them for the love they've given me. I hope to see them again at the end of my mission. I won't go home until I do. Sister Michaelis gave me a wonderful party the night before at her place - and, of course, all my favorite people were there. I also had a



Sister Rhodes, Desma Rhodes, Cecile



good three-hour talk with Elder Newbold to help prepare me a little more with the new assignment. Well, there's just not a soul in Torrens that I don't love - it's MY very own branch. I've never had a place become so much a part of me. How blessed I am! I'll never be able to thank my Father in Heaven for these last four months - especially for those dear wonderful Michaelises.



E. Newbold with Joan Michaelis



Phil Baker



Christine Rhodes

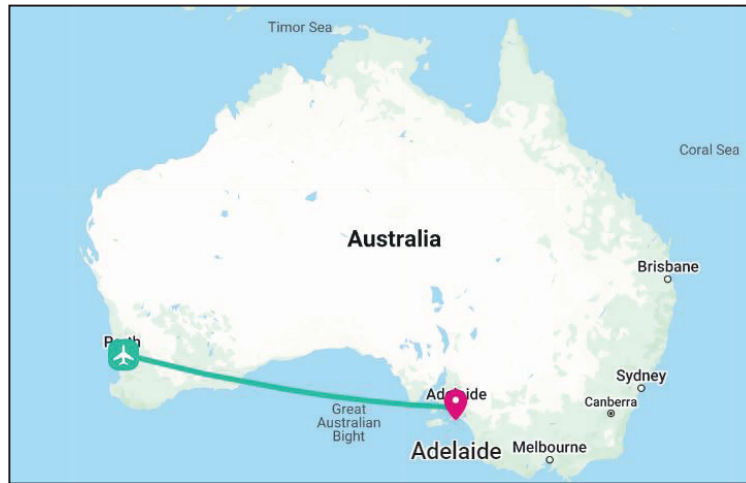


Balodis Children



Desma Rhodes

Perth, Australia Here I Come! (1,674 miles away)



4 March 1963 (cont.)

Well, here I am - a Supervising Sister in Perth, Australia! They say that any way I turn from here, I'll be headed for home because I'm halfway around the world. These early morning visits are quite the thing - they take me at least three hours every morning. I've got just a great companion!! She's dark, pretty and just my type of Australian gal. We'll get along perfectly. I already love being with her. Sister Elaine Fielding from Melbourne (Blackburn). My responsibilities are so great and I feel so incapable and humble, but everything's going to be great! I had a wonderful meeting with the sisters today - I was scared. I really hope they'll be able to put their faith and trust in me. We set district goals and then ended our meeting with testimony bearing. What a fine wonderful group of kids! (L.M.'s). The Sisters are: Elaine Fielding, Janet Roden, Jeanette Wagstaff, Gloria Taylor, Cheryl Lillywhite and Narida Brache.



Elaine Fielding



Jeanette Wagstaff



Narida Brache and Gloria Taylor



Gloria Taylor



Janet Roden



Cecile James and Carla Foreman



Roden, Lillywhite, Fielding, James, Milburn, Bannister, Foreman, Wagstaff, Taylor, Brache

April 1, 1963

I've been an S.S. now for nearly a month, and it's really great - I've met a lot of wonderful people and feel like the Lord is really blessing me in this part of his vineyard. Each morning I'm up at 5:00 a.m. and it takes till about 9:00 a.m. to make the rounds and see all the L.M.s. By 9:00 I've put on over 50 miles, and that's before the day ever really begins.

Perth is beautiful - even if there's a lot of sand everywhere. The people (as usual) are wonderful (but I miss Torrens terribly)! I've got to write about Sis. Smith, Br. Lander, Conference, name of our district, Sis. Gowin, Gary Michaelis, Hugo Korpse, Sister Roden, The Morts, Stuart Evans, Lawrence, Parents and new assignment - when will I ever find the time????

6 April 1963d

We really had a glorious day today. To begin with, at 7:30 we started an S/D meeting centered around the Restoration and Joseph Smith. We had talks on The Profile of the Prophet, First Vision, Early childhood (by me!!), Coming Forth of the Book of Mormon, Restoration of Priesthood, and Church Organization, Persecution and Fate of the Persecutors, Martyrdom and Fruits of the Prophet Joseph Smith. The meeting lasted til 12:00 p.m. and at 4:00 we had a baptism where 16 were baptized - it was just fabulous! Sister Annie Batty was one of these - she has really been GOLDEN ever since we met her. It's really been a thrill to teach her. She and her three children have got to work hard now to get her husband in. Anyway, it has all been a beautiful day to celebrate the organization of the Church. Annie Margaret Batty was baptized April 6, 1963 by Elder Hiatt and ordained by Elder Dunn. She was 22 years old.



Elder and Sister Dunn

Since I've been here, Sister Fielding and I have also seen two other people come into the Church. Sister Mavis Smith came in - she's the mother of four children who Sister Brache brought into the Church. Her husband also needs to be taught. On March 16, 1963, Mavis E. Smith was baptized by Elder Homer and was confirmed by Elder Dunn. She was thirty-four years old.



*Who says
missions aren't
fun?!!*



Homer, Stones, Albrecht (DL), Elder England (DL), James, Mendenhall, Hawkes, Dunn



Brother Charles Lander.
He's holding a little house that he made
for me out of slightly burned
match sticks

My whole mission I've wanted to bring a little old man into the church and I got my wish with Brother Lander. He's had an accident which even has made him fifteen years older than he really is. But this little man had a wonderful faith and testimony. He just can't seem to express his love for the Gospel enough. When he was dressed in his baptismal clothes (wedding outfit to him) he started to do the sailor's hornpipe. Just as he was ready to go into the baptismal font, he looked back at all of us and held his crossed fingers high in the air. The next day at church he wore a big old fashioned tie with a woman on it and Deborah Kerr's name printed underneath. He's really a priceless individual. I pray his faith might release some of the pain he suffers. But he's happy and reckons that "*It's Great To Be a Mormon!!*" Brother Charles Lander was baptized March 23, 1963 in Perth by Elder Glenn Hawkes and confirmed by Elder Glay Homer. He was fifty-five years old.

Have received the good news that Hugo Korpse, Sister Gowin and Gary Truss-Michaelis all joined the Church the Saturday after I left. I'm so thankful that I was able to give them the first four discussions. They're such wonderful people - and I really do love them - just like all the other Torren-ites.

(Note (2023): I should tell a little more detail about a couple of these baptisms. Brother Dainis Balodis sat in with us for all of Hugo's lessons and in-

terpreted into Latvian as we taught. He really needs to be given the credit for the great amount of teaching and fellowshipping that he did with Hugo. While I was in Torrens, we tried so hard to convince Gary Truss-Michaelis (eleven years old) that he should be baptized along with the rest of his family. As we taught him, it was so obvious that he was gaining a testimony of the truthfulness of the Gospel, but he just wouldn't budge. Then I got the letter from Gary while in Perth, telling me about his baptism (came a week after I arrived). He purposely didn't get baptized while Anne Milburn and I were teaching him because he wanted to prove to us that he was joining the Church because he absolutely knew it was true, and not just because he liked us. That was thrilling to hear actually.



1991 - Trip back to Australia - Gary and Lynette
Truss-Michaelis and their children

all these years. He came to BYU for a little while, he married a girl, Lynette, who had served a mission in the Philippines and was a companion to Kerry Ann McArtney (who we never met for several years later in Santa Rosa, but who we definitely adopted into our family). Gary and Lyn have three children, and now they're both in their seventies and are still very active in the Church, living in Brisbane. He easily bears his testimony many times over in his letters to me and Doug)

And for a further note about Gary.

He has probably never missed going to church in



Here we are in April 2011 - Gary visited Utah and was at our missionary reunion. Cecile, Anne Milburn and Bruce Newbold - we three were the ones who taught Gary back in 1963 when he was eleven!



Elders England and Cassidy



Elders Ed England and Stan Albrecht



Elders Glay Homer and Jim Brown

April 6, 1963 - cont.

We had a wonderful conference over here - one of the finest I've ever attended in Australia. The spirit was there in abundance. On the Saturday before we had an S/D Meeting and 13 were called for extemporaneous talks. Guess who got the 13th ?!!. (I had warned President McConkie many times to never do that to me, so I glared at him the whole time I was walking up). Honestly, I was scared to death. I hope that never happens again. I had to read the scripture: "*One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism.*" And then I had to tell what it meant - Ohhhh, and in front of President McConkie!

We've named our Sisters' District the "*Belle S. Spafford District.*" One of our "*pioneers*" has already left - Sis Roden left for home last Wednesday night (April 3). Sister Cordon is just a fantastic missionary. I loved her the minute I met her - just right to take Sister Roden's place. Wow, the problems that come up with sisters - I just couldn't begin to mention them. Some of them are more tied up with boys and missionaries than they are the work. I do like boys and missionaries, but you can't let them take you away from the missionary work. Thank goodness this is the Lord's work and everything eventually works out!

Stuart Evans got his call to Tasmania - he'll be a terrific missionary. I got a wonderful letter from Lawrence. Mama and Dad have gotten a new assignment - Townsville, Queensland - we just keep getting further and further apart. However, before going there I'm hoping they'll have a quick trip over here to W.A. (Fat Chance!) Their chapel will be completed, paid for and dedicated on April 28th. I'm so proud of them, I could burst. When they set out to do something well, it's for sure the job will be well done.



Elders England and Sister Archibald

Just before Sister Roden left we gave her a card with this poem:

*A year and a half is such a short time,
To spend in this wonderful work,
To study and pray and fast for this cause,
And work with nary a shirk.
The closeness that grows in the missionfield
Is something we feel for you -
Sister Roden, we love you and think you're just great,
When you're gone we'll be lonesome and blue,
For the love you've given to each one of us
Will never be forgotten,*



268 Hardy Road - where Sister Fielding and I lived in Cloverdale, Perth, WA

*Your smile and manner - that "way" you've got
 Is something that could never be "boughten."
 Please think of us often when you are gone
 As we labor both day and night
 And as we close each day with a prayer
 We'll remember your lovely sight
 So Farewell and Adieu
 Our Prayers are With You !*

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April 13, 1963 - Judy Carson and Richard Spark were baptized in the ocean last night!!! On April 12th, 1963, Judy Eleanor Carson was baptized and confirmed by Elder Glay Homer and Richard Spark was baptized by Elder Homer and confirmed by Elder Hiatt. Judy was 19 and Richard was 23 years old.



20 April 1963 - Judy and Richard were married





May 9, 1963

Well, I'm really behind this time. Perhaps I'd better finish about Richard and Judy. They truly had a wonderful conversion. But first, I must tell how we found them. Sister Fielding and I were just thinking it was time to go home - it was getting dark, but we decided to just knock on some doors down one more street. We looked down this street and decided to pass all the other houses and go to the end of the street. We looked at the houses and then said, "*This one.*" We knocked on the door, and Judy answered and invited us right in. She was interested with the first words we spoke. She told us that she was engaged and about to get married. Their first introduction to the Church was a youth conference with President McConkie. He gave this most wonderful talk on "*Prayer.*" We introduced them to President and the next Saturday they had the First Discussion - they just couldn't talk enough on how wonderful the church was. The Spirit of the Lord bore witness to them every time they heard the discussions. Well, on April 12th, they came for the Fifth Discussion - Elder Homer was presenting it with me. Before the discussion, I asked them if they had their change of white clothes with them, and they said, "*Yes.*" Before the discussion they weren't real sure of Joseph Smith, but by the end of it, with the added testimonies of Sisters Cordon, Lillywhite, and Fielding and Elder Hiatt, they were sure that he was a Prophet. They went into the bedroom to have of word of prayer together, and after many tears and laughter, they came out and asked us how the ocean was!! Well, if we didn't all jump with joy. Down to the ocean again!



I experienced something this night that I'm not sure I'll ever experience again for the rest of my mission. The water was rough with a real strong wind, but Judy and Richard were willing if Elder Homer was. Judy went in first, and after jumping a lot of the waves, Elder Homer held up his hand and began the prayer, and a wave that was just ready to break over their heads, just faded and died back down into the sea, and Judy was baptized. It was even more of a miracle when Richard was baptized. As they were waiting for the water to calm, they kept jumping huge waves, and when Elder Homer offered the prayer, another wave which was ready to break just calmed down, and Richard was baptized. As he came up out of the water, he said, "*Thank you, God.*" The confirmation was held at the chapel.

Then their troubles began the next day when they told their parents. Judy was kicked out of her home - a week before their marriage. After a number of trials that whole week, they had a beautiful wedding in the Church of England. Of the approximately forty in attendance, twenty-six were Mormon Missionaries! We were on one side of the aisle and the other fifteen or so in attendance were on the other side. I really love Judy and Richard - those two alone have made my whole mission worthwhile (plus my wonderful friends in Torrens!). My word! I love this Church and especially my testimony of its truthfulness.

(Note 2023: This is one note that is hard to write. However, this first part isn't hard. Judy and Richard had a good marriage and they had three gorgeous children. They were leaders in the church in the Branch at Bunbury. For years, even after I was married and had given birth to most of my children, we corresponded often.



While my mother and father were building two chapels in Perth (1964 and 65), they had good contact with Judy and Richard. Theirs was the picture of a perfect family. Then something happened. Judy made a trip from Perth to Santa Rosa, California to tell me what was happening in her life. I guess she wanted me to somehow try to understand. She wanted me to know that she had made the decision to go inactive. She had started to work and to sell real estate, and she was good at it. By 1979 she had established her own real estate business. Her marriage broke up. That was probably the year she came to visit me. I remember how terribly sorrowful I was as I sat there in my own living room and listened to her - I loved her as my sister, and still do, but I don't know how to find her. She is just two years younger than I am. She changed her name to Judi Moylan (perhaps it was another marriage - I don't know). She became active in the Chamber of Commerce, and by 1993 she was very involved in politics and was elected to Parliament. She was the first woman to hold a Western Australian seat in the House of Representatives for the Liberal Party. In 1997 she worked under the Prime Minister, John Howard, as Minister for Family Services. In 2011 she announced she would stand down at the next federal election. She was a powerful woman in politics in Australia. I know she is loved by her Heavenly Father. I can never forget how humble she was and how grateful she was to be a member of the Church all those years ago, but agency can take us in many directions. That was the first terrible sorrow I felt when someone I loved so much fell away from the Church. Now, in the last forty years since then, I've gone through that sorrow many times with friends and family who I love so much, and the pain of it goes to my very core. I can still love them, and will continue to pray for them. In the last ten years, I have found Richard again, and we have communicated. He became a rather lost soul after Judy left, and he wandered into many different paths, but it's good to be in contact with him again. He met my sister Cheril, when she served her mission in Perth about ten years ago. Life and "the world" can take people in so many directions. I'm still trying to find Judi.)



Hon Judi Moylan AO



Perth, February 1963, Supervising Elders and Sister: (Back Row) ?, Elders Skidmore, Brady, Brock, Gardner, Roskelly, Front: Goldsmith, Hawkes, Albrecht (RE), Stones, England (RE), James



Elders Albrecht, Stones, England



Sisters Goldsmith, James



President and Sis McConkie Believe this was taken in Adelaide about November 1962

Another sad Note, but this is about me! As it turns out, I proved to be a terrible journal writer the last six months of my mission. There are things I will tell as I remember them from sixty years ago, and from the sketchy notes I have left in my journal. On April 20, 1963, the same day as Judy and Richard were married, we had a baptism, and Barbara Allan was baptized by Elder England and confirmed by Elder Cassidy. I don't have a photo of her, and I don't even remember teaching her. She was sixteen years old. My life in Perth as a Supervising Sister was eaten up with so many responsibilities. I worked hard at trying to get close to the sisters in my district. The following photos were taken on P-Day (Preparation Day), and we went as a District to King's Park in Perth. Those in my district were: Elaine Fielding, Gloria Taylor, Narida Brache, Clara Wagstaff, Cheryl Lillywhite, Carla Foreman, and Marilyn Cordon.



Perth as seen from King's Park - looking across the Swan River



Belle S. Spafford District: Fielding, Taylor, Wagstaff, Brache, Cordon, Lillywhite, Foreman



"Jacob's Ladder" - King's Park



Perth from King's Park



King's Park

Now is a good time to tell about our experiences in our wee Scottish village in Perth. Many people back in 1963 were coming to Australia and paying only ten pounds for their passage. They were trying to "people" the land of Australia. If they chose to go back home, then they'd have to pay full passage. So, I spent the rest of my time in Perth in this group of immigrants from Scotland. It was so much fun! And we got to teach quite a few lessons while there. Sometimes this David Caldwell would bring in a priest from another church and challenge us. That was always unproductive! But



Sister Elaine Fielding and Sister Cecile James

this is when I met Jim and Mary Paton and their wee Lesley and their wee Jim. Mary was like an angel from heaven, but she had been badly trapped by cigarettes. She would tell us that she smoked ever so much more than even her husband thought she smoked. She hadn't touched a cigarette until she married, but now she was hooked. There was something that connected us - like that feeling that you had known each other before. We tried so hard to get Mary to quit, but nothing worked. Otherwise, she loved the lessons, loved the spirit in her home when we were all together. She loved Elder and Sister Dunn, and of course, Elaine and me. I got a transfer before we ever saw her baptized, but she said, "If ever all of us, including the Dunns, were ever in the same place again, she would join the church." Well, that wasn't going to happen.

May 20, 1963

Well, of all things!! I'm going back to Adelaide to be Supervising Sister over there. I just got the telegram today. Wow, what a shock. I could've cried. I've truly grown to love Perth and the people here. I've had such wonderful experiences. I think my favorite people have been the Scots - I've never had such fun in my life as I've had meeting with them. My favorite of all is Mary Paton. What I wouldn't give for her to be baptized before I went. They've all been so good to me.

So, on June 7, 1963, after I had been transferred back to Adelaide, this is what I wrote about Mary:

... I had a wonderful experience with Mary Paton right before I left Perth. On Tuesday night we had the films of the Salt Lake Conference. Just before the film started, Mary asked me if I would have a word of prayer with her before the night was over - what a thrill that would be! It seemed we'd waited so long to get her to pray. I felt a wonderful spirit with her and I'm afraid I wept all the way through those films. I can't quite understand why she wasn't baptized that night, but I pray it wasn't because we weren't worthy to see her come in - I worry and wonder about this. I want Mary to be given another chance and hope someone will show patience and love towards her. She's my special Australian "sister" (but she's Scottish!). I just love her so much. Perhaps someone should have taught her who didn't hold so much personal love for her. I just don't know enough answers I'm afraid. I hope the Lord will help me to understand more things.

However, before I left for Adelaide, there were a few more important things that happened while I was in Perth. One of them was a visit from Elder Gordon B. Hinckley, of the twelve Apostles. He only had a few hours in Perth, so we all met at the airport in a room big enough to hold all the Perth missionaries, and he spoke to us. It was pretty exciting!



*President McConkie and
Elder Gordon B. Hinckley*



*May 4, 1963, Shaun Locke
baptized his brother*

Also, Mother's Day was May 11, 1963. I don't know if this is the day that Australians honor Mothers, but I knew it was the day that I wanted to honor my mother - so, of course, being my mother's daughter, I wrote a poem. What else?

Mother's Day 1963



*Some mothers are perfect - or so it seems -
They are those "Angels" found only in dreams.
Some know how to cook and sew and clean,
A banquet in minutes with one chili bean,
A dress sown together, like magic I'm sure,
And to top it off - her favorite fur.
Some mothers can work, day in and day out,
Be a student, a nurse, and a wife of a scout.
Some can learn along with their young,
And go to the "Unie" - graduate with their son.
Some mothers just never seem to grow old -
They find it quite easy their youth to hold.
When they're active with youth, fulfill all their needs,
Give "special" help - pure happiness breeds.*



*Some can give love equal to all -
To a husband, 11 big and 18 small!
Some open their homes to games, fun and dances
And just get involved in all kinds of romances.
Some fall in love a hundred times fold
As their daughters search for that man of gold.
To answer their plea for a dinner invite,
"Well, dear, I would but he's just not my type!"
Some mothers are builders of things of all sorts,
Some can build chapels as big as two forts!
Some can lay stones - build patios big,
Irrigate lawns and cesspools dig.
Some can raise money and in just one short year*

*They can pay off a chapel, just never you fear!
Some mothers can plan a big carnival -
Why, life with some mothers could never be dull.
Some mothers are bold and I think if you'd "let her,"
They'd call on Jack Benny - not to mention Linkletter!
Some mothers will have in their mind reservoir
Experiences that range from excitement to horror.*

*Some mothers are perfect in the eyes of their kin -
Cuz they want to be what their mothers have been.*

*If I can come close to my highest ideal,
There's one thing to me that is very real
To be like you, Mom, is my constant prayer -
A mother perfect like you. is certainly rare.*

*I love you, Mama, is all I can say
I'm thinking of you on this Mother's Day.*





P-Day in Perth



Elder Michael Jepsen



Sisters Taylor and Bannister



Bev Craig



Bev Craig, Sisters Bannister, Taylor, Foreman, Nelson, Cordon, Lillywhite



Supervising Elders and Sister and Regional Elders: Roskelly, Gardner, Albrecht and England (REs), Brock, James, Stones, Hawkes

Payneham, Adelaide, South Australia

Last Transfer

22 May 1963

June 7, 1963

Well, I've been here in the Amelia Smith McConkie District for nearly two weeks now - my, how time flies! I really do have a lot of love for my sisters here - I've been blessed to have been given these sisters to work with. We had a beautiful testimony meeting the Monday before I left Perth - the Spirit was really present. Unfortunately, I don't think I'll ever get back to the beautiful city of Perth. Right now it just seems like a dream that went much too quickly. It took me nearly my full time to get the closeness among the lady missionaries and for all but one exception, I think this closeness was achieved. One sister just didn't ever open herself to anyone - I really did feel sorry for her. A girl I really love is Bev Craig - she is absolutely tops!

I'm going to strive with all my heart to be a good Supervising Sister here in Adelaide. I've got some wonderful sisters here. I only pray I'll be worthy of this responsibility. This is the famous Amelia S. McConkie District:

Elaine Fielding (From Mebourne), Archibald, Bartlett (From Perth), Barbara Hanson (from Perth), Judi Johnson, Joyce Nelson, Desma Rhodes (not a missionary yet), Jeanette Wagstaff, Cecile James, Gwynne Young (Melbourne), Goldsmith.



Sisters Fielding, Archibald, Bartlett, Hanson, Johnson, Nelson, Rhodes, Wagstaff, James, Young and Goldsmith



Gwynne Young and Cecile James

My last companion in Perth (for just four days) was Carla Foreman from Melbourne. Carla was the daughter of Bishop Foreman of the Morrabbins Ward, where I spent six months of my mission. My first companion in Payneham was Barbara L. Hanson. She arrived in the missionfield just a few weeks after I did. I was only with her for twenty-one days, and then Gwynne Young became my companion for the rest of my mission (from June 12, 1963 to September 6, 1963).



June 1963 - Elaine Fielding, Judi Johnson, Gwynne Young and Barbara Hansen



Gwynne Young



Cecile James, Barbara Hansen and Sonia Smith



Cecile James and Barbara Hansen (from Perth)



Here am I with four of my companions at a SAM Reunion. All four of these girls are from Australia. Gwynne (Young) Dean (from Melbourne), Anne (Milburn) Parker (from Melbourne), Cecile (James) Scribner, Sonia (Smith) McDougall (from Perth), and Elaine (Fielding) Hales (from Melbourne).

June 7, 1963 (cont.)

When I arrived back in Adelaide, I just couldn't get to the Michaelis' fast enough. When I got there, they ran out and talk about hugs and kisses!! Wow! I sure love that family - with all my heart. I hope that one day they'll understand just how much I do love them. They're growing beautifully in the Gospel. Jerry's a teacher and Gary's a deacon and Sis. M is a teacher in primary and directs singing and they're all just beautiful wonderful people!! My how the Lord has blessed me. These are the rewards of missionary work - the real rewards. I've been so happy since arriving in Adelaide that it's just been hard to contain myself.

Sister Alder leaves for home on Wed - she's been a really good L.M - I'm so glad to know her - it's been a privilege. I've never seen anyone with such a great love for the missionfield as she has. She's certainly made me love and appreciate my calling a lot more. One thing's for sure - "The Church is sure true today" and "It's Great to Be a Mormon!!!" I love this work and I love the Lord. I know the Gospel's true - it's beautiful to watch the fruits of the Gospel blossom in our converts. I haven't heard from Lawrence for almost three months - so maybe I won't. I do pray that God will bless him - what a wonderful strength he's been to me while I've been on a mission. I have a good landlord and landlady - the Smiths. Nearly 12:30 - better close and go to bed. By the way, I've got a wonderful companion! I will get a new companion, Gwynne Young, on June 12th - just five days from now, so she's likely to be my last.

Notes: Except for a little poetry that will end my journal writing, there are several things that happened in between that I guess I was too busy to write about but they are highly significant. So I will have to go from a few notes in my journal and my memory because my journal would not be complete without these events and memories.

On June 11, 1963, Marlene Smith was baptized in the Prospect Chapel. She was baptized by Elder Albrecht and confirmed by Elder Brock. Marlene was 26 years old.



Joyce Bailey - Baptized June 22, 1963

On June 22, 1963 Joyce Bailey was baptized - also in the Prospect Chapel. She was baptized by Elder England and confirmed by Elder Albrecht. She was 35 years old.

On June 29, 1963, Sue Miller and her daughter, Sonia were baptized in the Prospect Chapel. Sue was baptized by Brother Ferguson and confirmed by Elder Schomas - she was 33 years old. Sonia was baptized by Brother Ferguson and confirmed by Elder Schomas. She was 10 years old.



*Sue and Sonia
Miller
Baptized
June 29, 1963
at Prospect
Chapel*

On July 4, 1963, Christopher Heard was baptized at the Prospect Chapel. He was baptized by Elder Sessions and confirmed by Elder Gritton. He was 12 years old.

Then on July 21st, my 22nd birthday, we had a wonderful surprise. Mary Paton flew in from Perth to see us. The Michaelis' gave her a room in their home to stay in for the week. We took her with us to do missionary work, and of course, reminded her of what she told us before we left Perth: *"If all us are ever together again in the same place, then I'll be baptized."* We didn't think it was possible, but of all things, all of that same group were right here serving in Adelaide right now: Elder and Sister Dunn, Sister Fielding and I. . . and Mary! *"So Mary,"* we said, *"should we plan a baptismal date?"* Mary was superstitious, and couldn't believe the coincidence of us all being together.

She was still smoking, but she was determined to be baptized. And at about 11:00 p.m. in the ocean, the night before she flew home, she had stopped smoking for a few days, and was baptized! At age 32, Mary was baptized and confirmed by Elder Dunn. Then she flew home, and we had loaded her purse with tons of candy a gum. This lasted four months for her, but the smell of her husband's cigarettes was too much to resist, and she started smoking again, and drifted away from the Church. We kept a constant contact. She was always looking for that particular something in her life, and they moved back to Scotland, and after some years and restlessness there, they moved to, of all places, Pennsylvania. Well, my sister, Joyce, lived in Pennsylvania and we were visiting her in 1969, and we found Mary and Jim in Philadelphia! More restlessness took them back home to Glasgow, Scotland. In 1977, she wanted to come spend two or three weeks in Santa Rosa with me and Doug. I prepared my children to accept her (and her smoking) because I knew she couldn't go without her cigarettes. After she had arrived and several hours passed, I said, *"Mary, you are welcome to smoke in my home."* And in her beautiful and spirited Scottish brogue answered, *"If I thought I would ever have smoked in front of your children, I would never have come."* Two years earlier, for health reasons, she and some co-workers decided to go one day at a time without smoking. She had made it two years! I was thrilled and said, *"Mary! You've done it - you've conquered the habit!"* She answered with, *"I only hope I have. There's not a day or an hour that goes by that my body doesn't crave a cigarette."* Oh, my goodness - I was overwhelmed with what she had gone through - and was still going through!

Well, the years have brought us together many, many times - our three years living in Scotland, other trips to Scotland, her many trips to America to stay with us. My kids all love Mary as well - they loved to tease her because she always cleaned up their plates to wash them before they were even finished eating their food! One time she was sullen because we had disagreed on a few things (she was like family to me -and yes, we disagreed) so Craig even made up a rap song for her, just to bring back her cheery mood. She always attended Church with us, but never really became active again, though she did attend every so often in Scotland. She lost her son and her husband (too early) with cancer, and at age 82, (2013) ten years ago, she also succumbed to cancer. I have manila envelopes filled with her letters. We were always *"in touch"* with each other. My kids have asked me why I so persistently kept our relationship going when she obviously disagreed or teased me, and sometimes ridiculed me about my faithfulness in living the Gospel, even though



2002 - Mary's visit to California. I'm wearing a wig for Halloween (dressed as Mary - a beautiful blond). Another visit in 1991 - with Christy, Gina and Jim



I knew and they knew that she loved me. My answer was simple, and is the same with many of the people I've met over the years: *"God put her in my path, and my only job was to love her."* And my job was easy!



August 1963 was a busy month - it was my last month. We met this wonderful family - John and Denny Battye, and their three little sons - the youngest, Andrew was just a little baby still in a pram. They were being taught by Elder Stones and his companion, Elder Mann. They were enthusiastic about hearing the Gospel. Something we often did in Australia was teach together with the Elders - particularly if we were teaching a couple or a family. So that's what we did with the Battyes. We taught all their discussions along with the Elders. We had such a good experience doing this and grew to love this family. For some reason I seem to remember Denny telling us that she loved taking showers, and when she did, she'd stay in there until all the hot water had run out!

In the meantime, we were also teaching the Smith family and a young man named Darryl Hall. They were all good investigators - we were so fortunate to have met and taught them. Darryl Hall was baptized on August 18, 1963 in Prospect. He was 18 years old and was baptized by Elder Sessions and confirmed by Elder Gritton. The Smith family were all baptized on August 31, 1963 in Prospect. Rex Pile Smith, the father, 34 years old, was baptized by Arthur Fletcher and confirmed by Elder Mann. His wife, Kathleen Smith, 32 years old, was baptized by Arthur Fletcher and confirmed by Elder Stones. Garry Smith, age 14, was baptized by Arthur Fletcher and confirmed by Elder Mann. Nancy Smith, age 8, was baptized by Arthur Fletcher and confirmed by Elder Stones. She was the last person I was to see join the church on my mission. I wish I could find a picture of them, but no luck so far.

But I must take you back to the Battye Family. They also were baptized! Again, this was a family that I became extremely close to. John and Denny were both baptized in Prospect on August 25, 1963. They were both baptized by either Elder Stones or Elder Mann. John was confirmed by Jack Hooper and Denny was confirmed by John Tennant. They became part of the Payneham Branch which shared the building with the Prospect Ward. I could go on forever in telling you about our association with John and Denny. They were strong like the Michaelis Family and their faith never wavered. The Battye's faith was tested about five years after their baptism when their littlest boy, Andrew got out of the car while his Dad ran into the Church to pick up the other two boys from Primary. He was hit and killed instantly. The Battyes also had two girls. Over the years, we have gone to Australia and spent time with them on the Gold Coast, and they have come to America and spent time with us - at one time we took them camping in Yosemite. So fun! We've corresponded while they have served several missions - one was in America. They've only just recently (2022) lost their oldest son who died suddenly while he was in their home. David had at



John Battye, Cecile, Denny Battye, Gwynne (Young) Dean

one time served as Stake President in Brisbane and he also worked in China as a landscape architect - the same as my son in law. In fact, while Lora and Mark were living in China, they met and became friends with David Battye. Distance nor time has been able to keep our families apart from each other. We've shared our joys together and we've shared many sorrows. I love them forever.



August 13, 1963

There are so many things and events to go in before this, but I've just got to copy this in before I lose my loose copy. Last Monday, August 5, the Sisters presented the S/D Meeting for the whole region (which, I might say, was really fabulous!) and here is the song we sang them (Tune to "Sisters" from "White Christmas.")

*Sisters, Sisters, there were never such devoted sisters,
All day long we find and teach and testify -
Elders, watch out, we'll pass you by!*

*Through all kinds of weather, we stick together, the same in the rain or sun
Ten different faces, but in tight places, we think and we act as one.*

*Those who know us, know that even elders couldn't show us,
How to work, or teach or pray or even smile,
We always go that extra mile!*

*The scriptures - we know them
Discussions - we know them
There's not a thing that we don't know -
If you try to beat us, you'll find who's neatest
We Sisters like to go, GO!*

*Daily, weekly, everything we do is done completely
We always love to walk and walk and knock on doors
Come home every night and do the chores!*

*Please help the sisters if ever their duty they shirk
And please help the elders who come between us and our work!*

And. . . this is a copy of the poem sent to President McConkie on his birthday (29 July)
from the Amelia S. McConkie District



*Dot and Dave Tormey (from New Zealand) visiting
Adelaide and Cecile - June 1963*

Wagstaff and Archibald:

*Now Sisters Wagstaff and Archibald
Are two who are anxious to always be called
For surveys, discussions, or talks or what-have-you,
Never a thing they're not willing to do.
They worked extra hard for your Happy Birthday
And what they did we think was okay -
Two lives they did change, now isn't this JOY
For it worked out just right - a girl and a boy!
Their goldies each week will at least number TEN
A "First" every day is easy for them.
They turn their ground into Golden soil
Makes families happy and ministers boil.
They think it's great to be alive
For BAPTISMS, BAPTISMS, they will strive.*



President McConkie (with his new hairdo) and Sister McConkie. When I first saw the new "do," I said, "You for me when I grow up." President McConkie had a great sense of humor!

Hanson and Bartlett:

*On Alice Street two sisters live
Who work every hour, a message to give.
They've been tested and tried every possible way,
But now their fruits in front of them lay.
Hanson and Bartlett are really a team -
If you watched them in action, you'd know what we mean.
They always are up at least by 5:30
For they realize that we need to look purty,
So just before 6 they use this time
Instead of dressing an hour after 9.
They've got a goal, an envy to some,
A special baptism: Sister Hanson's Mum!
Their cold, barren winter has gone, you can see
Spring has arrived on the BAPTISM tree!*

Fielding and Nelson:

*The jackpot we hit in companionships
When Fielding and Nelson start moving their lips.
From Nelson we hear, "America's grand!"
But Fielding insists that "Australia's the land."
America's homes are warm in the snow,
The wages are high, expenses are low.
Now Fielding agrees that this may be true,
But to live in the States for her wouldn't do.
"Australia is young - more room to grow
Opportunities awaiting each Tom, Dick and Joe.
"Americans are wrong - they waste their time eating."
But, "Australians in weather, sure take a beating."
In one thing they agree when the question is riz
BAPTISMS we love - wherever they is!!*

Johnson:

*Sister Johnson, though she be very small,
Has a heart full of love over ten feet tall.
Her work is much different than ours can be
For she works all alone, or else works in three!
She lost her companion, but never you mind
She'll still do her work, her nose to the grind.
Now tracting for her is more than a chore,
To each of your steps, she has to take four!
She's anxious to work again in a pair
For it would do her good if she could share
This food she's been eating morning and night
In a member's home - now that just isn't right
That she should eat and dine like a queen
Just the thought of it makes the rest of us green.
With all this extra energy to spare
BAPTISMS from her - or we'll eat our hair!!*



Dot and Dave Tormey and their little girls - visiting Adelaide from New Zealand - June 1963



Sister Cecile James

James and Young:
*Me thinks that youse will never sees
 Two sisters with the likes of these.
 Two sisters who are up at 5
 To see if the others are still alive.
 They don't have time to shower or shave
 For they're much too anxious some souls to save.
 A study class they have "on the road,"
 As they learn some things they before never knowed.
 They're not much to look at and not very smart,
 But they love their work with all their heart.
 A Birthday wish from them would be
 To work twice as much in Aug. '63!
 From the sisters two who promise to you
 BAPTISMS, BAPTISMS - many, not few!*



Gwynne Young and Cecile
 This is a CAKE someone made for us!



Sister Gwynne Young - my
 last companion



Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints



Southern Australian Mission

CECILE JAMES

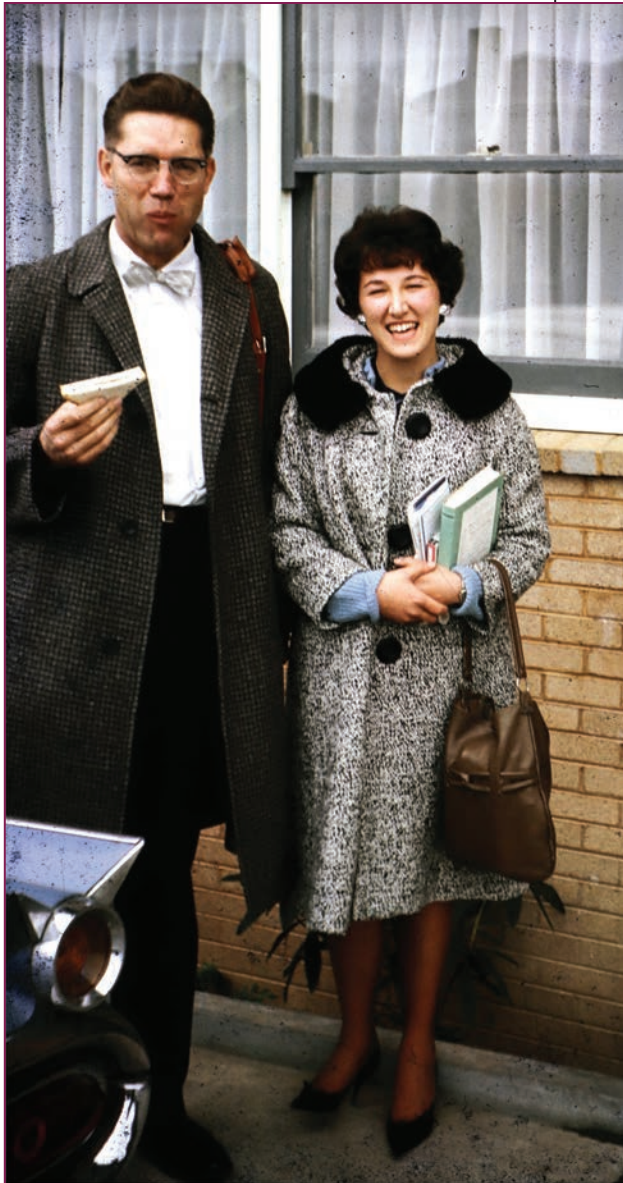
This certifies that you are honorably released from your appointment as a missionary in this Mission. No greater service can be rendered than to labor faithfully for the salvation of the souls of men. The gratitude of those who have been the beneficiaries of your voluntary, generous labors, will ever be a source of satisfaction and inspiration to you.

May the joy that comes from the conscientious performance of the duties of this high calling ever abide with you and inspire you with a constant devotion to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Bruce McConkie

September 6, 1963

Mission President



Yes, this is easily my favorite mission photo - the day I was released and headed for the airport. I dropped all my tickets as I was getting into the car (and didn't know it). President McConkie (eating a sandwich) picked them up and said, "You'll probably be needing these."

It was all my flights from Melbourne, to Townsville, back to Melbourne to meet my traveling companions, and then to New Zealand, Samoa, Hawaii, and then HOME.

Trip Home

Starting September 6, 1963

First Stop - Townsville



By the time my mission was over, Mama and Dad were in the process of building the Townsville Chapel in Queensland. This was in the Australian Mission. So that was my first stop to fly up to see them and say "good-bye." They were, of course, having a party to help build enthusiasm for the chapel and to help raise a little money. I got to meet several of the church leaders up there whom my parents hold a great love for. The houses are built on stilts because of the flash flooding that can happen here.



Next Stop - Back to Melbourne to
meet the other sisters I'd be traveling with:
Broderick, Heywood, and Wagstaff -
Then off to
New Zealand!



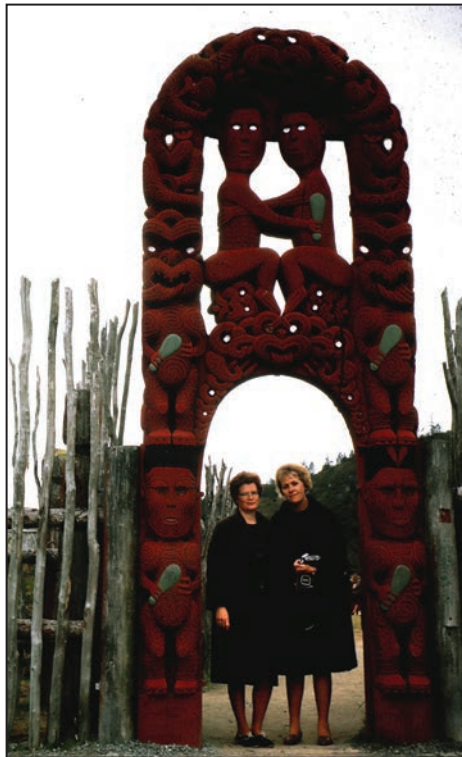
*Jeanette Wagstaff, Crystal Broderick, Kathleen Heywood,
our guide in Rotorua, Cecile James*



Crystal in New Zealand



Pete and Linda Henderson and kids now living in NZ. Pete is my adopted brother - I had to give up my bedroom for him when he came to BYU



Kathleen Heywood and Crystal Broderick



Kathleen Heywood, Cecile, Pete Henderson



While in New Zealand, we lady missionaries went to our very first dance - it was being held at the Stake Center in Temple View. We worked and worked at getting ourselves all spiffed up so no one would recognize as lady missionaries with a big lack of knowledge of dancing. So. . . we walked in and the first person said to us, *“Why, you must be lady missionaries returning home from your missions!”* Oh darn! It showed! Anyway, these two very handsome men were very kind and danced with all of us during the evening - our Knights in Shining Armor!!



Heywood, Wagstaff, Broderick, James

Here we are (Kathleen Heywood, Jeanette Wagstaff and Crystal Broderick) in front of the New Zealand Temple with our “Knights.”

Elder Glenn Hawkes and Elder Critchfield were also traveling home the same as we were. Every now and again, we met up. Once met in the New Zealand Temple and we did sealings together in the Temple - kind of weird for us.

*Next Stop:
Samoa
for Crystal B.
and me!*





Many of my slides were destroyed in our fire in 1991. Perhaps that is what happened to all my photos of Samoa. We spent time in Western Samoa visiting Sam Atoa and his family, and also saw my friend, Enosa Wilson who I had known in the Kia Ora Club. So wish I had the photos of Sam and his family, but alas. . . .

This is a photo of the plane that flew us to and from Western Samoa. Crystal Broderick and I in the photo. Don't know who is in the photo with Crystal.

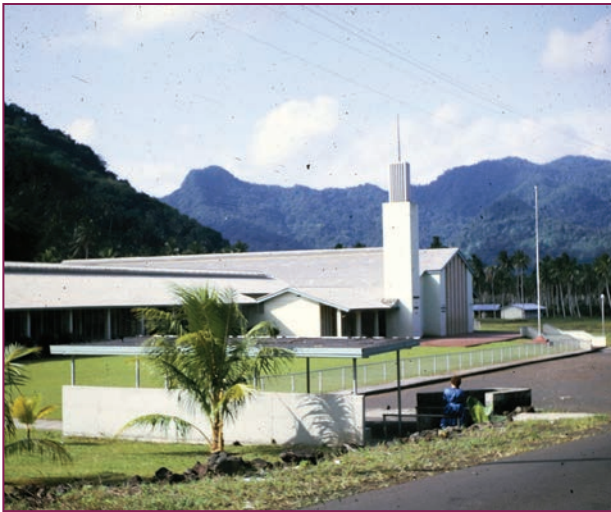
Next Stop: Hawaii !!!



Hawaiian Temple



Cecile and who? at the Church College of Hawaii



Crystal, Jeanette, Kathleen



Can't remember his name, but think I knew him in Kia Ora Club



Rona Belcher (Kia Ora Club) and her husband and daughter



June Cotter (Kia Ora Club - from NZ)

Reunions with Friends from Australia

4-16 September 1991

4 September 1991

SYDNEY - Kieth and Elaine Hales, Doug and Gwynne Dean, Rebecca Michaelis, Kaye (Bannister) and Pieter Nieuwenhuizen:

Kieth and Elaine - by 6 a.m., Met us with all their "G'Dies,"

*They took us to "town" - then Manly Beach, And let us get wet to our thighs!
The Harbour was Awesome - the ride "took our breath" - The Opera House in our view,
The Bridge and the Tower, more sights to behold - Chicken Kabobs, and a fancy "Loo!"*

Kamailie and Kris played piano for us - A visit with Doug and Gwynne

Crumpets for breakfast by special request - "Is overeating a sin???"

*The next day was spent with Gwynne and Elaine - Blue Mountains, Katoomba, the lot,
"Three Sisters" posed in front of "Three Sisters" - We've hardly changed (I thought).*

Then dinner that night in the "Officer's Mess," - A view from the brisk windy hill,

The Sydney Temple - Rebecca and Kaye - All this in three days? What a deal!



"The noblest aim in life is to strive to make other lives happier. Loving is not synonymous with possessing and possessing is not necessarily loving." (David O. McKay)



Cecile at Manly Beach



Three Sisters in front of "Three Sisters" in Blue Mountains





Doug in front of Opera House



Elaine, Cecile and Kieth Hales



A wonderful time seeing Sydney with Kieth and Elaine (Fielding) Hales - Sydney Opera House, ride on a ferry on Sydney Harbor, Sydney Bridge, Manly Beach.

Went to the Blue Mountains and saw the "Three Sisters" with Gwynne (Young) Dean and Elaine Hales.



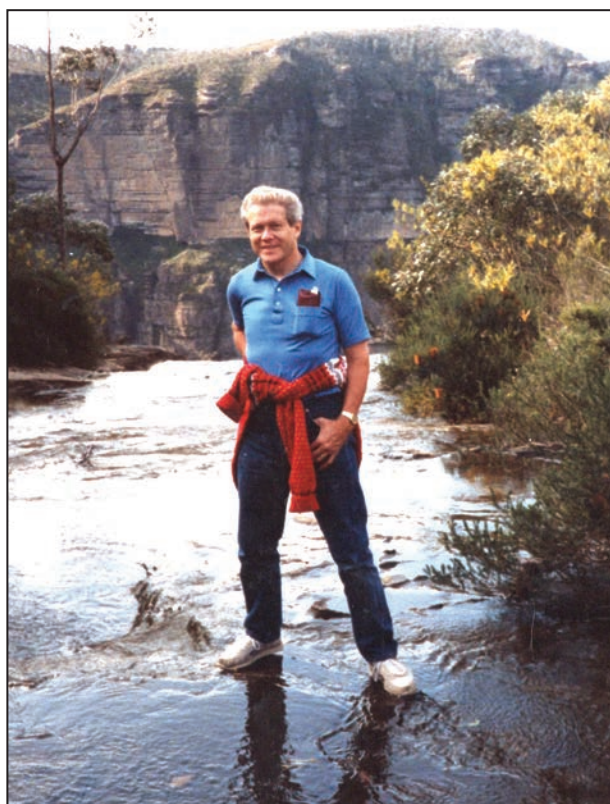
Elaine, Cecile, Gwynne (two of my companions)



*Kieth and Elaine Hales,
Rebecca Michaelis,
Kaye (Bannister) and Pieter
Nieuwenhuizen at Sydney
Temple - 1991*



Gwynne (Young) and Doug Dean - 1991



*Cecile
and
Doug
1991*





These photos taken in 1968 by Ron Hirschi when he served his mission in the SAM. Kieth and Elaine Hales (just married), Ron Hirschi, Stuart Evans and wife, Barbara

2001 - Gwynne Young Dean and Cecile in Blue Mountains again.



1968 - Stuart Evans and Barbara 1968 - Stuart Evans taken by Ron Hirshi

1991 - Cecile, Stuart Evans and his sister, Heather

6th September 1991

BRISBANE - Gary and Lyn Truss-Michaelis, David and Karen Battye, Ken and Maureen Waters:

Now Gary had changed after all of these years - He was merely a thirteen year old. His curly hair gone - thin on the top, But he's laughter and smiles - PURE GOLD! Lyn and the kids are a definite "plus" - Our friendships were made very fast, Their farm was so fun - the BEST in the WEST - With wallabies hopping past! The sheep and the lambs - how could we forget "Lambchops" and "Casserole!" Then "off to the loo" with Chumley the Horse, To guard and protect every soul! Our favorite trip was Mooloolaba - Aquariums, sharks and a seal - The trainride through the pineapple fields, A dessert which was more like a meal. Weet-Bix for Breakfast, Papaw for Lunch - Tropical weather to match - We love this family, their chooks and their cow - In fact, we've become quite attached!

"Happiness is when you know that the life you're living is acceptable to God." (Craig Scribner, Peru Lima North Mission)



Doug, Cecile, Lyn, Gary, Amber, Ryan and Holly



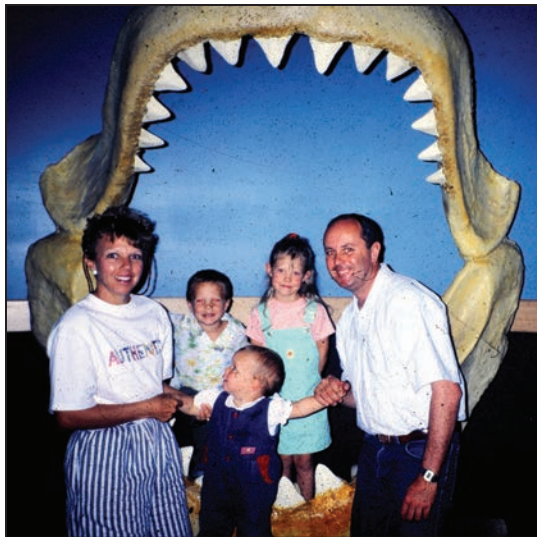
We were living in luxury for our time with Gary and Lyn!



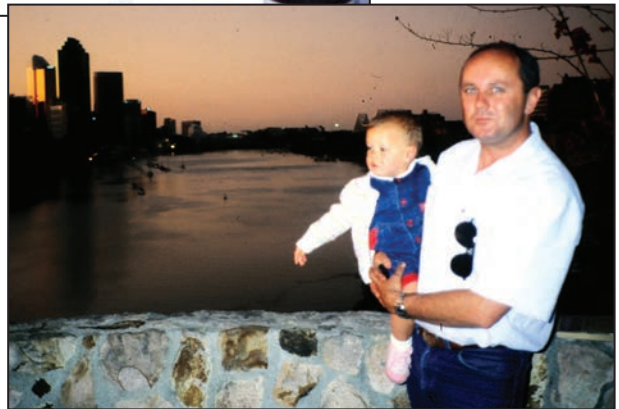
Ryan and Doug



Gary and Holly and Doug breakfast



Left: At the Aquarium



Right: Gary and Holly and Brisbane in the Distance

Below: Gary and Lyn's wedding day.



Gary with Dessert!



Lyn, Gary, Holly, Amber, Ryan (years later)





Ken, Suzanne, Maureen and Stuart Waters



*With Ken and Maureen we
renewed our love, And
mem'ries of Scottish Days,

Then shared some stories -
Amazing, but true That lead
us to Spiritual ways.*

*They really have witnessed some miracles - Coincidence? I
doubt very much -
God knows who they are, and we are blessed, For just having
kept in touch.*

**“God hears our prayers. He knows our needs . . . We will
come to know the mysteries of God and be grateful for the
tests, all of them.”** (Ardeth Kapp)

*When we left Australia some years ago, David Battye was only five.
He's grown a bit - has added a wife, Six kids who are very alive!
I look at him now as a Stake President, And I feel a deep inner joy -
But I must admit, I also can see That blond little five year old boy.
We all ate some lunch at Gary's farm, A happy "Day of Rest,"
We enjoyed their kids, but at the end of the day, We gave them all back 'cuz we were the GUEST!*

“If we love God, do His will, and fear his judgment more than men's, we will have self-esteem.”
(Ezra Taft Benson)



David Battye



David and Karen Battye and children

We loved the city from Kangaroo Point - How the river around it bends -
 It tugged at our hearts to leave these folks And all of our choice "young" friends.
 We left them all 'mid hugs and tears, Then exactly "right on command,"
 Ryan cried tears for everyone there, And made our "Farewell" GRAND!



"Love in your heart isn't meant there to stay. Love isn't love 'til you give it away."
 (from "The Sound of Music.")

Lyn Truss-Michaelis (holding Karen's baby),
 Cecile and Holly, Karen Battye

ADELAIDE - 9 September 1991. Jerry and Melva Michaelis, Shirley Truss, Aina Balodis, Phil and Trish Baker, John and Connie Nichols, Campbells, Jaunays, More!

Jerry was next and the "Old Torrens Branch," (This really is my kind of GAME!)
 The folk were all gathered at Aina's home - Different, yet somehow the same.
 Aina, vivacious, with all of her kids, And Vesma with all of her six,
 Shirley was there and could it be Cath? Time seemed to be playing some tricks!
 Phil Baker, a man - no longer a boy - A Wife! A Bishop (twice o'er),
 The Jacksons and Watts (Sister Phillips to me) - We talked 'til our throats were all sore.
 The thrill of the night was this big, handsome guy, "Andris Balodis, the Great!"
 He was just like his Dad in days gone by - Fate was lying in wait.
 How can one express the LOVE that gathers and grows through the years?
 These are MY PEOPLE, MY HOME "once removed," MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS, MY PEERS!

"True happiness is found when our lives are wrapped up with the lives of others, when we contribute to their happiness . . . Start out to make somebody else happy and see how quickly your own soul is filled with joy. Therein is a pathway leading to life at its best." (David O. McKay)



Melva and Jerry Michaelis



Shirley Truss (was Jerry's first wife) on left, the Jacksons, Catherine Truss-Michaelis on right



Aina Balodis (originally from Latvia) and Cecile



*Aina and her children: Back: Volde, Andris, Gundis
Front: Sandra, Loma, Aina, Vesma*



Cecile, Aina Balodis, Doug



Connie and John Nichols



Andris Balodis (born after I came home from Mission)



1968 - Cecile with Dainis Balodis (Aina's husband) and Rusty. He came to Salt Lake as Bishop of Torrens Ward. He died at age 39. Great loss to us.



Phil and Trish Baker - I didn't recognize him at first. He was now 45. He kept talking and finally I said, "I remember, you were that obnoxious 15 year old! And he was."



Rolf Michaelis, his wife and children

*The next day with Jerry and Melva was spent, INSIDE - Because of the Rain.
 My "little" Rolf was a tall handsome man, And MARRIED, (I'd say a "GAIN")
 We talked and told jokes and laughed 'til we cried! And emptied the almond bowl twice.
 We found the Nichols as young as they were - I guess they've been "sitting on ICE!"
 Then on to Doug's old stomping grounds - Jaunay's and Campbells were here.
 We reminisced for an hour or two, Took pictures and shortened the years.
 Before we left, we saw "Elder Sayers" (His Father was "ONE" long ago)
 We've gone "full circle" in Adelaide, And we'll do it again, I just know!*

"Time is marching on and it's marching right across my face!!" (from the movie, "Steel Magnolias")



*The memory I'll take from Jerry's home,
 Besides hot baths to my neck,
 Is DANCING with Jerry -
 German Polkas to boot!
 We danced 'til our hearts were a wreck!*

"To Live is to Dance, To Dance is the Live"
 (by Snoopy and Charles Schulz)



Jerry and the many books he has read!!



Doug & Cecile with Melva & Jerry in their home



Melva Michaelis and Shirley Truss (first wife) - good friends



Doug and Cecile at Michaelis' home



Jerry, Cecile, Melva



In Marion we visited the Campbells and their family, and the Jaunays. I didn't think I knew Brother Jaunay, but he insisted that I did know him. He then brought out an old journal of his where missionaries had written in it. And sure enough, I had written several paragraphs in his journal in 1963!



The Jaunays, the Campbells, Doug

MILDURA - 11 September 1991 - Jack and Ida Baird, Kaye (Baird) and Ron Roccisano, David and Yvonne Baird, John and Elwyn Frankel, Kerry Frankel.

*We rented a car and drove to Mildura - Ida Baird had prepared such a feast!
Her children were there, the Frankels as well - We ate for five hours at least.
Ida and Jack have hearts big as big - They're generous, GOOD, through and through,
They truly are the backbone and life To the Saints and all of their crew.
We barely escaped this family, you see, For every minute we stayed,
They filled our pockets with rocks, food, and gifts - Just ask us, we like it that way!*

“Charity is the Pure Love of Christ and It Endureth Forever.” (Moroni 7:47)



Ida and Jack Baird - about 1970



1991 - Jack, Cecile, Doug, Ida



1991 - Doug with Frankels and Bairds



Winkelman and Scribner - 1961 - Mildura

HORSHAM - 12 September 1991 - John and Ronnie Van Stekelenburg (met in France)

*We'd never been to Horsham before,
But to go there was really a thrill
To renew our friendship with Ronnie and John
Since our "meeting" in France "on a hill."
A Kookaburra sits in their old Gum Tree
Laughing at us here and there
Our visit was short, but sweet as could be
Such moments truly are rare.
When we're together, our time is well-spent
Thoughts and feelings are shared,
Love for our families, both present and past,
We hope they know that we cared.*



“Love isn't something we store up. We draw it fresh from God each day.” (Ardeth Kapp)



We met Elder Joey Sayers (from Tasmania) while he was serving his mission in Adelaide

We drove from Adelaide to BALLARAT - Judy Cooke, Graham and Val Tomlinson, Stuart Evans & Heather

*Words can't describe the scenery,
The lambs, the newly-sheared sheep
The Gum Trees, the rivers, the skies of clear blue,
Red sunsets with colors so deep.
We often were warned of Kangaroos,
Koala Bears high in the trees,
This must be the way to keep drivers awake -
Those Aussies just like to tease!*

“Don't spend too much time looking down. . .don't dwell on your failures . . . learn to laugh at yourself . . . Eat more ice cream, and less broccoli. . .Stop to look at the Sunset.” (Paul Dunn)

BALLARAT - 12 September 1991

*Ballarat was a Mem'ry - my very first home, Before I started my mission
My Dad built their church on cold and wet days (I knew he'd rather go fishin')
Graham and Val took us stragglers in -With just a few hour's warning.
The weather was cold, but their fire was warm - We talked all the night until morning!*

“Thoughts make us what we are. They lift your soul heavenward or drag you down to Hell. To have the approval of your conscience when you are alone with your thoughts is like being in the company of TRUE AND LOVING FRIENDS.” (David O. McKay)



Judy Cooke, Cecile, Graham Tomlinson Below: Judy and Graham 1962



Graham & Val Tomlinson and their children, Doug & Cecile



Cecile in front of the chapel her father, Cecil James, built in 1962



Doug in front of home my parents lived in, in 1962



Ballarat home in 1962 with Cecil's truck in front

*Heather and Stu drove many a mile
 To meet us for dinner, and all . . .
 I ate very slow to stretch out the hours,
 The "tales" I told were all "tall."
 But try as I might, they really did leave -
 I really DON'T want to wait
 Thirty more years, to spend just an hour
 In "feeding" a friendship so GREAT.*

"The Supreme Happiness in life is the assurance of being LOVED; of being loved for oneself, even in spite of oneself." (from the book, "Les Miserables")



Doug, Stuart Evans, Cecile



*2001 - Melbourne - Narida Brache, Lyn Felt, Doug, Cecile, Paul Felt, Stuart Evans, Leona Bender
 (all past SAM missionaries in 1961-1963)*

TASMANIA - 13 September 1991 - Keith and Dawn Sayers, Matthew, Paul, Amy, Jimbo (James) and Louisa

*Tassie, the land of beautiful woods - Myrtle and Sassafras
Tassie, the land where we saw our good friends, Keith and Dawn Sayers, at last!
We travelled to Hobart to see all the lights - Romantic?? You bet your life!
The trouble was, Doug's eyelids would drop - Sleep was better than wife!
The market in town filled hours and hours - Our gifts were purchased OKAY!
But when we went to Richmond that day, We bought many more - HOORAY!!
(Thank you, Keith, for that gift-buying stop. How did you know I was "Born to Shop?")*

*With Dawn I danced, and we danced until dawn - To good ol' Maori stuff.
Doug and Keith were patient with us, - Until they said, "'tis enough, 'tis enough!"
Our day of rest was needed, you see, But Keith kept pulling our bluff,
"What time do we leave? Is it 9, 10 or 3?" Decisions can be very tough.
We went to church all over the place - We had lots of gas, I suppose
We got to the airport just barely in time - With luggage and dirty clothes!
But our hearts were all so full of love - Our spirits greatly were "fed."
Oh, what a day! and Oh, what a week! Someday we'll need a bed!!*

"And remember the truth that once was spoken: To LOVE ANOTHER PERSON IS TO SEE THE FACE OF GOD." (from the play, "Les Miserables")



Keith, Amy, Paul, Dawn, Louisa and Jimbo



Louisa and Jimbo



Cecile and Keith



1991 - Jimbo, Matthew, Dawn, Keith Louisa



1991 - Keith, Dawn, Doug, Cecile, Matthew, Front: Jimbo, Louisa



Louisa, Dawn, Doug - 1991

Through the Years with Keith and Dawn Sayers and Family



1974 Visit to Santa Rosa (Bridgewood Drive)
Dawn and Cecile



Gina, Scotty, Rusty, Craig in 1974 - doing "Nga Waka"



Elder Sessions and Keith Sayers in 1962



2001 - Tasmania - Robbyn and Maggie Scribner,
Craig and Tommy Scribner, Cecile, Keith and Joe Sayers



Sayers Family - about 1989



2001 - Joe, Dawn and Keith



Had fun teaching Louisa and Jimbo the Little People Dance. A lot of fun - 1991

Right: 2001 Visit to Tasmania - Keith, Dawn, Cecile, Doug



MELBOURNE - 16 September 1991 - Paul and Lyn Felt

*A phonecall - a moment - to run past the years
 Is all we managed with Paul
 But what a delight to hear him speak
 "Aussie" - that says it all
 We both left Provo in '62
 And came to the Land of OZ -
 I went home, but he came back,
 Yet our goals were a common cause:
 A spouse, some kids, trials and faith,
 Happiness, Love of God.
 We must not forget all those whom we love
 At Home - and those ABROAD . . .*



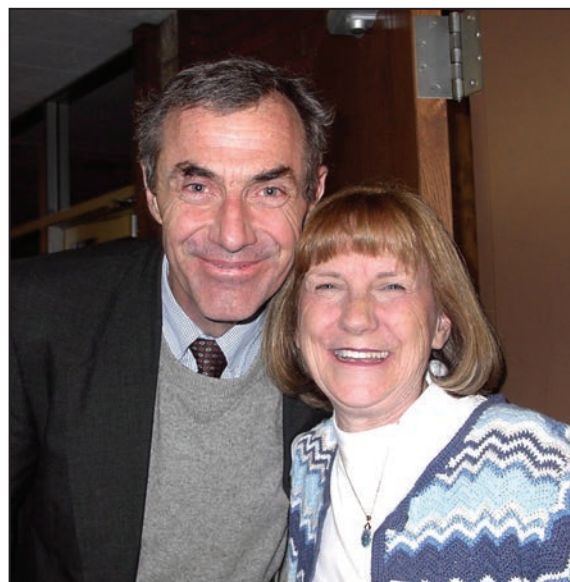
Paul Felt on trip home (to Provo) from Australia - 2008

"The pupil dilates in darkness and in the end finds light, just as the soul dilates in misfortunes and in the end finds God . . ." (Victor Hugo, "Les Miserables")

Other Reunions Over the Years with Australian Companions or People We Taught:



My parents visited with Sonia Smith on her 21st Birthday while they were in Perth. Sonia was my second companion. Later Sonia married Robert McDougall who was also a returned Southern Australian Missionary. They moved to Provo with their family. Sonia took a turn away from the Church, and she and Robert were divorced. She never came back into activity. Robert stayed active. They both died several years ago (it is now 2023), and I was able to get to her funeral.



Dennis and Anne (Milburn) Parker (2003)

2002 - Anne Milburn, Cecile, Kaye Childers, Doug. It is now 2023 and Kaye Childers died about twelve years ago. Anne and her husband Dennis are getting ready to serve a mission in France. Anne was my third companion; she was born in England, but moved to Australia when she was young. I probably had the most success on my mission when we were companions. She was dedicated, sincere, beautiful, and everyone loved her. She flew to America to be at my marriage with Doug, and she stayed and married an American. We've kept close contact all these years.



Anne Milburn and Cecile - 1964. Anne arrived in America in time for my wedding in June.



2001 - Perth - Cecile and Barbara (Hansen) Chapman. She and I entered the missionfield at the same time. She married and later her husband became Stake President. However, afterwards, they divorced.



2001 - Perth - Cecile, Doug, John and Vicki Grincer, Craig and Tommy, Robbyn and Maggie. Craig and family were living in Australia (his work) so this is why we went on this trip. They traveled to Perth and Tasmania with us. John Grincer was a youth missionary when Doug labored in Perth in 1961. At about age 28 he was called to Italy and was the youngest Mission President in the Church. He was a Bishop at about age 22. He was also President of the Perth Temple.



2001 - Perth - Phil Baker and Cecile in front of Melville Heights Chapel, one of the Chapels Cecil James built on his mission in 1962-1965.

14 November 2008 - Elk Ridge, Utah - Dinner at my home with Australian Missionaries: Ann, (Milburn) - my third companion, Cecile, Lynette (Platt), Sonia (Smith) - my second companion, Mary (McConkie), Crystal (Broderick) - my first companion.





2001 - Perth - Many people gathered to welcome us "home." Doug served in Perth for at least a year. A few of these people are labor missionaries who helped my father, Cecil James, build the Dianella Stake Center in Perth. Others, Doug knew very well while on his mission. He served in Perth for a year at least. Phil and Trish Baker in front have visited us and many others in Utah several times.



2001 - Adelaide - Cecile with Jerry and Melva Michaelis - Jerry was an amazing convert (German)! It is now 2023 and Jerry has never wavered (nor has his son Gary). He went through a divorce, remarried Melva, has been a Bishop in Adelaide.



Lonnie and Kaye Nally - Perth - 2001

Lonnie was serving as President of Perth Mission at this time. I've known Lonnie since we met while I was in high school and he was a freshman in college. We dated in 1963. He had just returned from New Zealand Mission and I was about to leave for Australia. Had I stayed home, another story would've been told.





1987 - John and Denny Battye with Lou and Louise (dau)



1985 - Sister McConkie and Mary (McConkie) Donoho



March 21, 2001 - John and Denny Battye with daughter. Denny and John have been on more than three missions - once in America.



Maybe sometime in '70's - Elder (President) Bruce R. McConkie at a General Conference in Salt Lake



The Balodis Family. Brother Dainis Balodis died early, about age 39, right after he was serving as a Bishop in Adelaide. Aina Balodis wavered for awhile after that in activity, but never in testimony. She came back strong in the Gospel and has this great posterity! This was taken on our visit in 2001 (I think). Aina and her daughter and grand-daughter visited us in Santa Rosa.



2023 - Cecile

I suppose it's time for me to stop with the photos. I have many more which chronicle many reunions with my Australian friends and yearly reunions with the missionaries who served in the Southern Australian Mission (SAM). It's been sixty years since I came home from my mission in 1963. I'm now eighty-two years old. My mission to Australia has affected my entire life. I learned so many life lessons on my mission - one very hard lesson that took me through six hard months (my first six months of my mission with Sister Smith) - and many joyful moments of teaching, seeing some people baptized, and holding on to those friendships for life. I had wonderful experiences in teaching the Gospel to so many people who were older than I was. It caused me to change the direction of my major at BYU (which I never really finished until I was sixty-one years old). I didn't end up

marrying the Flake boy who I faithfully wrote to for over two years, or the Nally boy from Arizona, but I married Doug Scribner who was a Regional Elder of mine in Melbourne during the last six weeks of his mission. Doug was short (at least to me because I wanted to bring some height into the James Family), wore thick glasses, and was from California for heaven's sake! But one of the greatest attractions to me was that I knew what kind of missionary he had been in Australia. We married and lived in California for over forty years - this is where we raised our eight children. And I loved California! Doug and I both shared the blessing of serving under the leadership of President Bruce R. McConkie and his wife, Amelia. That alone had a profound effect on both of our lives.

The thing we wanted most for our children was for each of them to also serve a mission. Seven of the eight did just that. However, they all had different experiences than I did and perhaps their missions left them with different feelings. I'm not really sure what all their feelings are. Nevertheless, a mission is very rarely a wrong choice. There is so much to be learned about God and his son, Jesus Christ, about the Gospel, about life, about people, and particularly about yourself. I learned how to repent, how to forgive, how to pray with real intent, and how to love, and how to part with people I loved, never knowing if I'd see them again in this life. I learned and experienced so much. I read the Book of Mormon for the first time. I think it was on my mission that I stopped leaning on my parents' testimonies and developed my own. In all the reading I did on my mission and since, I don't think it necessarily converted me - I already felt that I had been converted at a very young age. I just don't remember ever not believing. But everything since then - my reading, my activity in church, my very exciting (to me) church callings, serving other missions, my association with people from all nationalities and foreign lands, and even through the loss of Doug, parents, siblings, nephews, nieces and many many close friends, and my holding on to the words of living prophets - well, all of this has confirmed to me over and over again that my testimony is real, that it is founded on truth and faith and a great amount of love for all the people who have crossed my path. I know so surely that Heavenly Father and Christ live, that there is nothing that God wants more than for his children to live in such a way that they may all return to live with him, that God gave everything in order that this would be possible - he gave his first born, beloved Son, and it is through this sacrifice - the suffering of Christ in Gethsemane and on the Cross - that we are able to keep changing, repenting and forgiving, and growing in our service to one another and eventually being able to live with them and with our own loved ones.

My constant prayer is for my family members - my children, their spouses, my grandchildren, and my great grandchildren - to have the happiness I've found in this life and to also have the desire that I have to live and progress together in the hereafter. I fervently pray for these things.

