

HUNTLY MY PLACE



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Preface

Writing about one's early memories of your home town, is never easy and I do not expect that the journey I am about to embark on will be easier. More so, as up this point in time, I have given no real thought to the subject, or kept any notes on the subject. Add to this a twenty year plus absence from home — it certainly rams home the enormity of the task.

Being fifty nine years old I am probably at the age when 'old timers' (Alzheimer's) or dementia starts to set in. However, it certainly allows for some latitude when stretching the facts to make the story more interesting. May be not so believable, but a lot more interesting. And the exciting thing about dementia is you get to meet someone new every day. The reader should also bear in mind that not being an academic or for that matter a scholar of any note, I do tend to ramble on, and change subjects readily. So, if you feel confused while perusing this work of art, save some pity for me. My mind will probably be more confused than yours.

Who knows what brought on this idiotic idea to write this book (booklet) as I refer to all my 'works of art', probably a delusion of grandeur after a few too many brown ales.

In February of 2006 I received an email from Pae, the head teacher of my old primary school advising me of the upcoming fiftieth anniversary of the school which will be held over the Queens Birthday weekend. Having missed the thirty fifth reunion in 1981 I was determined I was not going to miss out on this one.

My last trip to New Zealand was three years earlier so the decision took no time at all. I promptly rang my elder sister Patricia to let her know that I would be attending and to arrange for my registration. This was not the first school I attended, but the one that I like to believe had a greater influence on the moulding of my mind and my general make up as it is today. They certainly have a lot to answer for. All jokes aside, Huntly West School and for that matter Huntly West in general probably had more influence on my life during that time than any other period of my life. I am proud to have been part of the history of the area — and it is history, anything that happens today becomes history tomorrow. No matter where I am in the world, home to me is Huntly.

After many years away from 'home', the memories have indeed faded and, hopefully, the readers will bear the following points in mind:

- firstly, time can play wonderful games with your mind, confusing the issue about what was real and what was imagined. As a child, sometimes dreams and wishes become reality in your mind, and
- secondly, age wearies the mind and the memories that were once vividly etched in your

mind, the years slowly erode away, and like a well used record or 8 mm home movie, become scratchy and indistinct.

Everyone will have their own memory of events from their childhood years and remember them in a unique way, and probably have special or private event or occasions that hold a special or treasured place in their memories. What I recall and write will not necessarily be what they remember, or the way they recall the events happening.

However, I will attempt to adhere to the facts and keep the stories as accurate as possible bearing in mind that everyone will have a slightly different version of the events and the way they recall them.

Very few writers recording a historical subject will agree, there are always slight variations. Give 10 economists a problem and they will come up with 10 different answers, each one correct. They just use different scenarios, 'ifs and ands'. As my mother used to say, "if ifs and ands were pots and pans there would be no work for tinkers".

History is always recorded after the event, wouldn't it be good if we could write history before it happened. No, imagine how boring life would be, there would be no excitement of events to hope or dream for.

Being of Scottish, Welsh, Irish and English descent you may find the odd tale somewhat jumbled. However, that's the way we are. Anyone who has been in a conversation with my three sisters will know

what I mean. When girls start chatting the conversation is very hard to keep up with, they are forever changing the subject. Just as you start to come to grips with the topic being discussed they move on to something different. To the uninitiated it must be very frustrating, it is for me. Regardless of that trait they have been truly wonderful sisters and I could wish for none better. My mother used to tell us that her family, the Smiths, was the same, so I suppose it must run in the family. Or could it be just a common female trait.

Hopefully the book will give a reasonably accurate account of what life was like and some events I can still recall whilst growing up in Huntly. It will cover the years from 1952 to 1978 or there about, the latter being the year I last moved away from Huntly.

The book will also include a section on the Huntly West Primary School fiftieth reunion and my return in the year 2000 with some of the changes I noted. Some good and some not so good. If you happen to disagree with any of the events or the way I have described them, please put pen to paper or fingers to the keyboard and write up your memoirs so that they too will be recorded for posterity. Eventually we will have a more complete history of the community during our days for our descendants to read.

I have included a few photographs, black and white of course. That's all we had in those days, the old Brownie box camera.

As previously warned, by nature I am pretty erratic and impulsive; I tend to write the same way, as a thought comes into the head I just write it down. The reader will note me switching back and forth between subjects as well as repeating myself. Mind you this is probably quite normal when recalling memories. Once the process starts the mind wanders all over the place. So prepare yourself for a unusual journey down memory lane. I am sure just the mention of some names and places will start you reminiscing of your past and drag out memories that you may have thought were gone. Some may be good, others not so good, regardless, it is now all history and you were part of it and it cannot be changed.

Personally I hope this small contribution to the literary world will incite in others the need to and encourage them to record their memories for their children and children's children. I for one was always a captivated when my mother and father talked about their youth, the happy times, sad times and their achievements.

I suppose I am very lucky in that I have a very good editor in Mr. James (Cock) Robbins, OBE, and as usual he will transform this commentary into an acceptable work of art. Although, he has mentioned the older I get, the bigger the mess it is. I lay all the blame on The South Pacific Breweries as after a few of their fine products I tend to loosen up and then the pen can not keep up with the mind. He is lucky he doesn't have to type it; even I have problems deciphering it. My writing has not improved much since Standard One.

The Beginning

I suppose I should start at beginning. I was born one morning when the sun didn't shine; I picked up my shovel and walked to the mine and so forth. If I had elected to stay in Huntly and vegetate, that would have probably been my theme song. Not that I would have had a career as a singer. I have been told many times; do not give up your day job.

I was born in Cornwall Hospital in Auckland on the twenty eighth of April 1947. Our family moved to the Huntly area in the early 1950's probably 1951 as my first school was Huntly Primary, my unusual logic tells me I would have had to been younger than five years old when we moved there. Actually none of us can agree on the actual year, we all probably suffer from the same complaint, 'Old Timer's Disease' (Alzheimer's).

We moved to Huntly West probably around 1952 and lived at 16 Smith Avenue. Pauline was the first child born after we moved to Huntly, closely followed by Robert and Russell. In all we were a close family of seven children, Kelvin, Patricia, myself, Bernice, Pauline, Robert and Russell. A couple of dogs and cats, a dozen or so fowls, a rabbit or two and a couple of guinea pigs that quickly become a 'Group' - my apologies, I could not find the a better collective noun for guinea pigs, surely being 'pigs' you should be able to use 'herd' or 'drove'. Anyway, you know what I mean. Probably the two that I remember best was

the greyhound 'Mike the Millar' and 'Rusty' the cat. The latter's nickname was Rusty No Balls on account of an unfortunate meeting with a razor blade. Rusty was a great cat, dearly loved by mum in her later years. But like all mammals grew old and senile and in his declining years — 12 or 14 years old and toothless. He used to race around the house like a chook with no head. Mum reckoned he was going through a change of life — I thought he was just bonkers. I also remember squashing a guinea pig or two. Occasionally we would let them out to wander around the garden and to do this I used to turn the hutch on its side. On one particular occasion one or two had escaped under the side of the cage and were hiding behind it. When I flipped the cage over it landed on them, they looked more like fluffy flounders than Guinea Pigs.

Any memories I may have had of Huntly west prior to starting school have long since departed the area in my skull where the brain is supposed to be. My first memory of my time at Huntly Primary is around the time I was in primer three or four. It was around that time that I ended up in hospital with peritonitis. Due to complications like the appendix bursting prior to my arrival at the hospital. Combine that with the fact I also developed jaundice meant I had a prolonged stay of three months at the Hamilton Hospital. Thus having to repeat that particular year at school. During that time the Health system did not cater to well for teaching children in hospitals. In the main, school work was given by my teacher to my mother who passed it on to me during her visits .

I do remember another event earlier when I was either five or six. On this particular occasion the school was having a fancy dress party. Mum in her wisdom decided I was to go as the Easter Chicken. She had probably spent hours making up the fancy dress costumes for me and the rest of family. I recall one of my sisters being dressed as Little Bo Peep, Patricia I think. Any way on the day of the big event I started to get feverish so mum checks me out, sure enough I had chicken pox. Ironic isn't it, here I am dressed as a chicken and then develop Chicken Pox.

Huntly Primary was the only school during those years other than St Josephs Catholic School. I am not sure whether Kimihia School or Rakaumanga School existed then, they probably did, but being five, I would not have been aware of them let alone remember it.

Huntly Primary at that time consisted of a main block and a few prefabricated class rooms, a Dental Clinic, a Wood-Work and Home Science (cooking) building. A couple of shelter sheds completed the setup. The school was situated at Huntly East in the vicinity of and to the west of Hakanoa Lake where it still is today.

The lake was very popular for a couple of weeks a year at the beginning of May. The miners used to have the first of May off (May Day) which coincided with duck shooting season, I think it was a conspiracy thought up by the early miners to enable them to have an extra day off work around the turn of the century. They probably deserved it anyway, they must have worked under some horrendous conditions.

On the south west side of the school was the local rubbish dump, the local supermarket and secondhand store for us kids. Many a good bicycle was built from parts obtained from there. Not to mention the extra pocket money made from collecting bottles and scrap steel and lead for reselling to the buyer in Webb Street in Huntly West, his name escapes at this time — another memory gone, probably the last stubby I drank — there can't be too many brain cells left.

On the north side was the old slag works and the municipal swimming baths looked after by old George. George was like a father to most of us. I can still see him rushing up and down the pool side to scold someone when they did something wrong or leaning over the pool teaching someone how to swim. Honesty abounded in those days, we used to leave our spending money at his office in a series of cubby holes, and it was never stolen or misplaced. What a time, you were rich if you had a shilling, though the norm was sixpence.

The Lawn Bowls and Tennis Club were to the north west of the school on the southern end of the domain. The Bowls Club always fascinated me; I especially loved the palm trees outside. Over the years the domain has been utilised for many and varied activities, Greyhound racing, soccer, athletics and probably the most popular event when it came to town, the circus. There were other bodies that utilised the area, but again, damn those brain cells. I wonder if you can sue the breweries.

On the west side of the swimming baths was an old mine adit or air shaft, I presumed this to be originally part of the Ralph's mine. Of course kids being kids we had to explore it, probably one of the more stupid and dangerous things we did. Not only dangerous but damn scary as well as after about 20 metres into the shaft it was pitch black, something I was to get used to later in life. That's about all my mind can remember of the area during those early days.

Growing Up

Growing up in a small rural town is probably one of the greatest things one can experience in life. I call it rural as with a ten minute walk in most directions you would encounter the wide open spaces and farm lands. One of the things I do regret is never growing up on a farm, although prior to shifting to Huntly dad worked on various farms in the area, Pukekapia and Waiuku. I sometimes get flashes back to those early days, sleeping in the wool shed and playing in what I referred to as 'lovey' grass, home made bread with jam and cream. However, like I said, only flashes - it may only be memories imparted on ~~me~~ by my mother as she recounted those early years to us. My nickname at that time was 'Mokak', given to me by mum when she found me on one particular day, in the cot with crap smeared all over me. I never grew out of that name and when my brothers and sisters were angry with me that was what I was called — as they say it stuck. At other times it was 'Baby Noel', another name I have for life. Life in Huntly West was almost as good as living on a farm due to all the open spaces in the close proximity of home.

Smith Avenue where we lived almost all of our early years was part of a State Housing scheme that covered most of the Huntly West area; there was a similar area in the Hakanoa Street area.

In the early fifties many of Huntly residents were coal miners, and during the coal boom housing was essential if the mine were to operate efficiently. Most of the houses were situated on quarter acre sections. This allowed a large area for playing and most importantly a garden and most families made good use of. It was a great place to grow up in, a tight knit community and as I like to believe, non racial. We were a very diverse group made up of mixed European descent, Scottish, English and Welsh, including some from the Scandinavian countries. Mixed in among the group were Hindus, Cook Islanders and probably a lot of other races that I was not aware of at the time.

We had a large Maori population in the Huntly West area, and also as Wahi Pa (Marae) was situated at the end of Harris Street where it still stands today, which brings other memories to mind. We would trudge to the top of Harris Street to meet 'Wong' to purchase pork bones or the occasional pork head. From memory I think one pork bone (back bone) cost around two shillings and sixpence and a pig head five shillings. Of course the pork bones were to go with puha or watercress, kumara and motu motu, no pakeha in our pot. Mum used the head, to make a wonderful brawn. I still use her recipe to this day when ever I can find a pigs head.

Being children we all played together and I for one could not see any difference between us fair skinned kiwis (pakeha) and our darker skinned mates. We played together, went to school together, got into trouble together and probably all chased the same girls together. As a lad of about thirteen and fourteen I vividly remember the field days when the Maori community would gather to play sports. Tekauwhata, Rangiriri, Ohinewai, were some of the venues. Best of all was the food, kono's of pork and either watercress or puha, corn, and my favourite kanga wai or as others called it pirau corn, (rotten corn). Then of course who could forget the troi (fermented muscles and puha).

We did not have to resort to forming gangs as we know them today, a group of us would just get together and have fun. Granted some of us had a bit more freedom than others. Of course you had children's arguments, but they were soon forgotten and you got on with having fun. I suppose to day our groups would be referred to as gangs by the politically correct do-gooders.

Paul mason, nick named "Magot" - how he got the name I never knew and must note he was my best friend. I remember a time when we were about eleven or 12 years old and we were playing Cowboys and Indians. In my wisdom and being the cowboy decided to climb up a power pole, not too high maybe nine or ten feet. The idea was that as the Indian (Paul) road past I would jump on top of him. The brainwave maybe came from watching to much of Tom Mix,

Hopalong Cassidy or Lone Ranger pictures. However, I did not count on Paul being smart enough to realise he could get hurt as a result of my leaping on top of him. Two weeks later after much pain and limping around with a very swollen foot I was sent across the road to see Mr. Jim Gordon who happened to be a St John Ambulance volunteer. He took one look at it and advised mum I should see a doctor as soon as possible for an x-ray. It turned out I had five broken bones in my foot. I ended up with my foot and ankle in plaster for the next twelve weeks and yes, names all over it. I have since learnt that I have what is referred to as a high pain threshold. This probably explains why I do not feel pain like a normal person — I just thought it was no brain no pain.

The masons originally lived next door to us in Smith Avenue then shifted to Webb Street next door to Wallace Rutene and his wife Noeline (nee Hoeta) and the McCall family, my younger brother Robert would recall the latter well as he used to play with Peter McCall. While I am talking about Webb Street, who can forget Wilson McBriar, we used to call him the 'Mad Scientist', not because he was mad or anything but he could make the best gunpowder in town — for a kid that is. He used to make explosives and blow holes in the vacant ground behind our house. Another of his talents was being able to develop films. Not bad talents for a thirteen or fourteen year old.

Victor Wilson was my blood brother then, we even cut our fingers to mix our blood to make it seem more real. Vicky, myself, Anne Kani and a few others who's names are lost in time would get together and go out

late at night, late for us that is, probably only seven or eight o'clock and raid fruit trees in the neighbourhood. The sort of terrible things children did in those days. Anne's favourite trick while acting as lookout was to wait until we were up the trees then call out in a loud voice, "You boys stop stealing the fruit from the trees". We would scamper down the trees and literally flew over the fences. Another time when we got caught, the lady who owned the property probably thought she could teach us a valuable lesson, she told us that if we asked we would probably be allowed to pick some fruit by the various owners. Being children we could see no merit in that, it took all the excitement out of it, you know the rush of adrenalin.

Whether I would have the same memories if I had not grown up with the wonderful brothers and sisters I had or under the watchful eyes and the guidance of our parents I will never know. We probably didn't appreciate them as much as we should have in those days, but, isn't that the case with most children. One day you wake up and they are not there for you any more. I remember when my mother passed on, five years later I would still try and ring her up after imbibing in a few too many of my favourite nectar.

The 1950's and 1960's were fairly laid back, simple and uncluttered. No television or computer games. Remember the days when we used to stay at home playing ludo, draughts and monopoly or going out to beetle nights — throwing the dice for an arm or leg. Rushing home from school to listen to the radio to catch the latest episode of the Air Adventures of Biggles, the Goon Show or a little later in the evening

Life With Dexter. Saturday nights would see the family huddled around the old valve radio attempting to answer the questions on 'It's in the Bag' with Selwyn Toogood.

Being a large family we tended to make our own fun as a group or joined up with the other children in the neighbourhood with whom we got on well. Of course that doesn't mean we didn't have the normal childish squabbles, but when we did they were normally over in a few days. We played the normal games children of that era did, we even played school, the oldest would be the teacher and we would be tested on our tables and spelling, although I must admit it did us no harm although I don't think they needed to use the ruler when we got the answers wrong. I doubt very much that you would see that game being played today among the modern 'enlightened' children. Imagine today's children working in the imperial system, in units of twelve and so on, this made the tables invaluable to us, probably the reason we still don't need to use calculators in most circumstances.

Remember the old banana boxes, making billy carts with other parts obtained from our used parts store 'the dump', we could usually construct some great contraptions. Leathers Hill was the best place to try out your skills. Many grazed knees and arms resulted, mainly due to not bothering about fitting brakes.

Growing up in Huntly West was great, most of my generations² were the result of the 'Baby Boomers'—hell we are the Baby Boomers. There were loads of kids around, lots of open spaces. Peter Leather's

Farm, Tom Melling's Farm, further out to Jeffcote's Farm and lastly Baker's Farm near Wahi Lake. Then of course there was the old opencast mine about a mile and a half away, the original pit was then full of water. The later mine was situated about half a mile north of there; we called it the Weavers Mine even though Weavers Crossing was about a mile away to the west. These areas all featured significantly in our varied and adventurous years of growing up.

We could not wait for summer to come around. All we could think of was swimming in the mighty Waikato. It may seem strange to talk about swimming in October to today's generation but that was when we started.

Labour weekend heralded the start of our swimming season — the Municipal baths opened on that weekend and to us that was the start to the best time of the year, summer. Only the brave or you could say foolhardy would go swimming in the river, first there was the current to worry about then hidden snags. Being children we knew no fear — we were indestructible. When the new bridge was built (Tainui) we used it to assist us to swim across the river. We would swim from pile to pile, this included the younger ones, however we were well looked after by the older children. As we got older we naturally progressed to more challenging feats of daring or should I call it foolishness. We would walk out to the centre of the bridge and dive off the outside of the walkway; I believe the height would have been approximately 20 metre. The feeling you got when your stomach tried to exit through your mouth was worth the effort, probably akin to a rush of adrenalin. We idolized the older boys

who used to climb up the arches and dive over the walkway into the river. I was never that brave. I think we must have had a guardian angels looking after us in those days. Some people still refer to the bridge as the new bridge, and it will probably be called that until all those alive at the time it was built have passed on.

Summer was a very exciting time for us. When we were younger dad would load us all into either the old Whippet truck he used on his bottle round or into a rental car. Yes, including mum and dad the nine of us, try that with a small 1953 Prefect car. We would head off to the beach for the weekend either Port Waikato or Tapu beach at Thames — I think we loved Port Waikato the best. Dad would either rent a marquee tent from Grey Sweetman or borrow one from a mate; this was our home away from home. Mum cooked on an open fire, they were great days. When the tide went out there was a great expanse of flat sand to play on. We used to take nets with us and drag them over the shallows to catch flounder which in those days were plentiful.

The sand hills were great for playing games or pretending you were in the French Foreign Legion. Of course we made friends with locals and not just because they had horses, we would ride bareback over the hills for hours. My favourite pastime was sitting on the wharf all day fishing, I never caught anything of note but that wasn't the point just being there with all the others was great. Port Waikato was a very safe beach then, very few people went out to the coast area where they surf today, to damn dangerous. I remember dad talking about smoking

rock, apparently local custom had it that there was a particular rock at the coast and if you smoked on it while fishing you would be washed away.

I was always a different sort of child and with very set ideas, you could probably class me as a loner, I did what I wanted, not what any one else wanted me to do. Regardless of what my mates called me I did my own thing.

We were great friends of the Hoeta family who lived at Kimihia, we would walk all the way from Huntly West just to play with Noeline, Wainoa and Michael. Their Mother Mabel and father Charlie were great people in their own right — down to earth ‘Grass Roots’ or to use the politically correct term today ‘Flax Roots’. The other family that I spent a lot of time with was the Tiananga and David families – Cook Islanders. You could say they brought me up for many years as I spent just as much time with them as I did with my own family. Tui Tiananga and Etata were like an extra set of parents, Turiaki David Snr was another who took me under his wing and can still remember a song they used to sing about him — I see Turiaki aue kia kikovan.

I mention elsewhere in the book that I fell in love with Raynor Benton, however a young girl who stayed with the tianunga’s. Fernhill was probably my first true love, she was a lovely girl. Sadly she passed on whilst very young. At that time I could dance like a Cook Islander and even had a reasonable command of the language. The food was delicious; I could never get enough of it. Being used to the food would hold me in

good stead later in life when working in Papua New Guinea — very similar. Through that family I also got into amateur boxing having my first lessons from George Petero a cousin of theirs. Boxing lessons were held at the Workings-Mans Club. I could always hold my own but never got into any serious boxing. I do remember the time I was used as a sparring partner for Ray Brader Junior, he was quite a good boxer who had had a fair few amateur bouts but am proud to say besides a few blood noses I held my own against him.

As children of a middle class working family I like to believe we had a lot more fun of our own making and believe this has stood most of us in good stead for the trials and tribulations of life. To a great extent it imparted in us the ability to weigh up problems and successfully solve them or if we didn't learn from our mistakes. We learnt to make reasonably good decisions and accept responsibility for our own actions and lastly to become good members of the community.

Did I have any enemies in those days, of course I did like any child does. Not so much enemies but probably just children I did not trust, Bobby Aulsbrooke, Tommy Hodgeman and to a certain extent his brother Kevin, Ian McKenzie. Looking back now they were probably not enemies but being a shy sort of person I could not handle persons who were forceful and by my nature always rebelled against them and eventually ended up fighting them; just part of growing up.

The memories flood back when I think of those days, not all good but as a whole pleasant memories. We are all probably lucky to be alive to day considering the things we did. I must add something in here that was given to me a few years ago, I cannot acknowledge the writer as I do not know who wrote it, its just one of those anecdotes that gets passed around.

You are a survivor

Congratulations! You are one of us: A true survivor!

According to today's regulators and bureaucrats, those of us who were kids in the 40's, 50's, 60's, 70's or even the early 80's probably shouldn't have survived.

Our baby cribs were covered with bright colored lead-based paint. We had no childproof lids on medicine bottles, doors or cabinets, and when we rode our bikes, we had no helmets. Not to mention the risks we took hitchhiking.

As children, we would ride in cars with no seat belts or air bags. Riding in the back of a pickup truck on a warm day was always a special treat.

We drank water from the garden hose and not from a bottle. Horrors!

We ate cupcakes, bread and butter, and drank soda pop with sugar in it, but we were never overweight because we were always outside playing.

We shared one soft drink with four friends, from one bottle, and no one actually died from this.

We would spend hours building our go-carts out of scraps and then rode down the hill, only to find out we

forgot the brakes. After running into the bushes a few times, we learned to solve the problem.

We would leave home in the morning and play all day, as long as we were back when the street lights came on.

No one was able to reach us all day. No cell phones. Unthinkable!

We did not have play stations, Nintendo 64, X-Boxes, no video games at all, no 99 channels on cable, video tape movies, surround sound, personal cell phones, personal computers, or Internet chat rooms. We had friends! We went outside and found them.

We played dodge ball and, sometimes, the ball would really hurt.

We fell out of trees, got cut and broke bones and teeth, and there were no lawsuits from these accidents. They were accidents. No one was to blame but us. Remember accidents?

We had fights and punched each other and got black and blue and learned to get over it.

We made up games with sticks and tennis balls and ate worms, and although we were told it would happen, we did not put out very many eyes, nor did the worms live inside us forever. We rode bikes or walked to a friend's home and knocked on the door, or rang the bell or just walked in and talked to them.

Rugby league, rugby and soccer had tryouts and not everyone made the team. Those who didn't had to learn to deal with disappointment. Some students weren't as smart as others, so they failed a grade and were held back to repeat the same grade. Horrors! Tests were not adjusted for any reason.

Our actions were our own. Consequences were expected.

The idea of a parent bailing us out if we broke a law was unheard of. They actually sided with the law. Imagine that!

Our generation has produced some of the best risk-takers and problem solvers and inventors - ever.

The past 50 years have been an explosion of innovation and new ideas.

We had freedom, failure, success and responsibility, and we learned how to deal with it all.

And you're one of us! Congratulations!

This all happened before lawyers and governments regulated our lives, for our own good. Political correctness gone mad.

Brings back a few more memories, doesn't it.

Rambling On

These day parents are probably more protective than they were in our days, not that they didn't care about us, they just expected us to be more responsible. What am I talking about; we are the parents or now grand parents. So I suppose in a way we can rightly accept some of the blame. Our children's children may never be able to appreciate the fun that can be had, to make decisions or think for them selves, our children's lives are now simply organised for them. What a pity. Mind you they certainly don't have the open spaces that were available to us and there are some very dubious characters out there today.

Our mother, like most of the others from that era were very good in the kitchen and had the knack of combining their duties with the ability to keep us occupied in one way or another. I can vividly remember all of us children sitting around knitting socks, mittens and whatever else she thought would keep us occupied.

One of the activities I enjoyed was blackberry and mushroom collecting. We would all be packed off with buckets and sent out to the local farms. Mind you collecting mushrooms was like the old saying ‘the early bird catches the worm’, you had to be up early to get the best mushrooms and usually left home just on dawn, which could be any time from half past five on. A lot of bleary eyed children would be seen in those days trudging down the road to collect mushrooms. When cooked up by mum for breakfast it was all worth while. At least picking blackberries could be done at a more civilized time of the day. We were lucky in that we could collect berries very close to the house, at the vacant area at the back of our garden, or opposite the opencast mine screening plant. If you have ever been scratched by blackberries you will know what I mean when I say, having a bath was sheer torture, especially if you were unlucky enough to have some bad scratches. The jelly and jams mum made from them was fantastic, and was always looked forward to. Another activity was collecting crab apples from the trees out near nana Paki’s house (Kirkwoods) on the west side of the railway track at the screening plant. This was also turned into jam. Mind you we had to be careful when collecting them in case we got caught.

Weekends could see us walk miles over the hills to collect firewood — not because we needed it as most of the stoves burnt coal, and that was in plentiful supply and purchased very cheaply if your father happened to work in the mines. The delivery of the coal was handled by Clay’s Transport. Paul Clay was also one of the boys in my class at school and lived

next to the Miners Hostel in Huntly West. Paul Mason was probably one of my closest friends at that time, a year younger than me but a true friend. When it was bath time in our house and if Paul happened to be there he was tossed in the bath as well. The other family members were John and the twins Donna and David. We all called their parents Aunty Olive and Uncle Lorry and even today we still refer to them as such, its called having respect for your elders.

Anyway back to the firewood, we would all go to the wooded areas in the surrounding hills and bush areas. The trees consisted mainly of native pines and manuka (tea tree). There would have been at least five of us at any given time but those numbers could swell if we all went. Our two dogs would also be taken along. Topsy a wire haired terrier - Paul or David's dog and my dog Boxer who was a Cattle Dog - black Labrador cross. Our mother would erect a flag pole and raise a red flag when it was time to come home, the youngest was always made lookout. Of course we all took sandwiches and cordial for lunch.

We would select a central area and stockpile all the small branches and pinecones there. These would then be shared out among us. Even the dogs had to literally pull their weight. The firewood was tied up into bundles and tied by a harness like contraption to the dog and they in turn dragged their loads home. Our loads were strapped to our backs and we trundled our way home, resting frequently to give the dogs and younger ones a rest. In the course of a day we could cover over five miles.

Then of course there was Wahi Lake. On the weekends mum would make up sandwiches and drinks and we would tramp over the paddocks to the lake about two miles away. We would stay there all day and have fun that only children can. About 20 metres out from the shore there was an old rusted hunk of steel the top of which was about three foot under the water, it was shaped like a capstan. We never actually found out what it was but it was in great demand as a diving platform. Then there was the old wooden canoe made out of a single tree, may have been a early relic of maori origin. The canoe always had to be searched for as it was usually under water but once found would use up another few hours.

One of the highlights of our excursions was when the older boys would accompany us, especially Robert Woods and his brother Lenny — another good friend of mine, not the Robert whose father owned the shop in Semple Street but the one who lived in the new area in Cobham Crescent. Robert was the type of person who could do most things and one of our favourite diversions with him was catching eels. When caught they would be cleaned and wrapped in clay or mud, then tossed on a fire, and when cooked they made a mighty feast. This brings me to another expedition into the hills. On this occasion we caught a Pukako which we decided we would cook and eat. We did the same thing to this bird with the exception we did not clean it or gut it as some one had heard that's how it was done. So we wrapped it in clay and pushed a piece of green suplejack (similar to rattan cane) up its rectum and put it on the fire — this was to let steam out. After about Two hours we decided it

was cooked as we could smell roast chicken. We opened it up and hacked it to pieces with a not so sharp sheath knife and attempted to eat it. Have you ever tried to eat old boots? Of course we had never heard the old anecdote about cooking it with the axe head and after four hours throw away the Pukako and eat the axe head.

Down River Road was the old Roose's Quarry where we would practice our rock climbing. Then there was Mr. Hodgeman's Tugboat and barges which were then sited along river road. It was a great place to play as long as you didn't get caught.

We were never forced to go to church, but were encouraged to attend by mum, I think we all ended up with a fairly solid grounding in religion. As children we attended the Methodist Church on the Huntly East side of town and later when the Baptist Church was built at Huntly West we attended there. I for one was very serious about religion then, I would comfort all my brothers and sisters when they were hurt or in trouble and tell them that God was watching them and would look after them. I was a very compassionate young man between the age of twelve and fifteen; I even had delusions of being a doctor-missionary in the deepest bowels of South Africa. The best I ever got was being employed in some of the remotest parts of Papua New Guinea. I still have that compassion but it's a lot more controlled than in those days. I used to give every thing I had away to the needy even to the detriment of myself.

My older sister Pat has fond memories of going out with dad to walk the greyhounds. She assures me that they would sometimes walk up to twelve miles. In those days dad was an avid racer of greyhounds. The track was based at the Huntly Domain. It was great fun watching the dogs chase a furry imitation of a rabbit around the track; we even won a few prizes. One of our jobs then was to walk up to Starr Town and buy horse meat for the dogs from Mr. Morgan. At that time Huntly was probably the main centre for greyhound racing in New Zealand, and people came from all over New Zealand for the National championships. It was much later when Keumu became the main centre. I often wonder whether, had they built the track that had been planned for Huntly West at the back of River Road on reclaimed land, would have Huntly remained the main centre for greyhound racing.

Another favourite past time was, during the hay making season we would build forts out of the bales, mind you it only lasted as long as the season so we made the most of the time available. We would erect some quite elaborate edifices. Sometimes in conjunction with this activity we would excavate tunnels under the forts. How dangerous was that! The soils in our area especially the flat areas were predominantly volcanic ash and sandy loams. This sometimes entailed using timber to prop up the roof and walls. Engineering geniuses, no! Our fathers were underground miners and we were good listeners especially when they discussed work with their mates. We did have a few mishaps and numerous close calls. On one particular occasion when the tunnel

collapsed one of the younger children was inside. You can imagine the frantic efforts of five or six youngsters trying to dig out their friend buried three to four feet under the ground. How would we tell his mother we just buried her son? After that we restricted our building efforts to above ground. Of course we played the time honoured children's games of the day such as 'Doctors and Nurses' and, 'Mothers and Fathers', you know the ones, you show me yours and I'll show you mine, nothing serious ever came from it, we were all too young. I think for time and eternity children will still be playing those games. I like to believe it is all part of the growing up process and learning about the mysteries of the body and that the body and sex is not a taboo subject. I don't think it did any of us any harm.

Being a small urban town and with many farms in the vicinity I was always looking for ways to make some additional pocket money. Being from a large family this was always in short supply. I would do anything to make a quid. Around 12 or 13 years old I would be out in the paddocks turning hay by hand or removing thistles on the neighbouring farms. I can even remember the last time hay was cut on the rugby park area. During that time they still made haystacks the old fashioned way by hand and real hay stacks.

On the north eastern corner of Rugby Park there used to be a stand of pine trees, not being afraid of heights I delighted in climbing to the top and then swaying the tree from side to side. Did I ever fall, of course I did, many times, but usually the branches would break my fall or I would be snagged by a branch. Thinking back

now it is better luck that judgment that saved my life on many occasions.

Another way I used to earn pocket money was delivering milk. Over the years I worked for a few different 'milkos' the first being Mr. Ray Benton. The Benton's lived two doors away from us between the King and McFetteridge families in Smith Avenue. I thought working for Mr. Benton fitted in well with my overall plan for life as I had a crush on his daughter Raynor. What better way to get to know your future father in law than work for him — maybe a bit naïve for a 12 year old.

In those days milk was delivered out of large milk cans. Remember the milk; left overnight there would be a nice thick layer of cream on top. The residents would leave a one or two pint billy at their letter box with a note and the money or plastic tokens inside — it was very seldom that the money was stolen and if it happened that the money was missing we would leave the milk, and write on their note explaining what had happened. I used to have a two gallon container slung over my shoulder and dispensed the milk by a way of a half pint dipper. Sadly the Benton's shifted away and I was left heart broken; for at least a week. True love, no, puppy love — time heals all.

The next 'milko' covering the Huntly West area was Mr. Noel Stow. His daughter Beverly was in the same class at Huntly West School as me. No, I did not have any designs on her, she was cute, but I thought, out of my league. Noel later worker worked with me at the

Power site in the late 1970's, a wonderful man and great friend, whom I greatly admired.

Another milkman I worked for was Mr. Cope, who covered the Huntly East area. A very devout Christian and a person whom I admired greatly, for his strong beliefs and character. It was during his time that we changed from bulk milk to bottle milk, this made the job a lot easier, for me anyway. What I enjoyed the most was the free milk he let me drink at the end of the round; this small thing placed him higher in terms of my respect for the man. When I said it made the work easier I meant the milk run only as I still had to complete homework and other chores set by my parents. Together with carrying out the duties of being a younger brother and annoying the hell out of my older sister and brother it was a busy time of my life. That is what young brothers are for, right; Just joking. As a family we were very close, particularly in those early years.

Yet another favourite method of raising money was catching eels. I used to use what little pocket money I had to buy beef liver from Dow's Butcher Shop at Huntly West and go to the river, very close to where the Tainui Bridge is today or at the back of the College grounds by the old rowing shed. I would sit for hours catching eels. I actually fell asleep one time and toppled into the river. Not that it deterred me - it just made me more determined. On a good day I could catch up to six reasonable sized eels. I would trudge home carrying a sack full of eels and call over to see Mr. Paki Wilson who just happened to live across the road from us. I could usually turn one

shilling into about five or ten shillings by selling them to him.

Rugby League was a big part of my life in those young days. Huntly United was the only league team I ever played for. I made the Schoolboy's Representative side for the South Auckland Competition as it was called then and completed my playing days at the age of thirty two years old in 1979, still playing for United.

I also played Rugby Union as required by the school. I represented Lower Waikato in the Northern Roller Mills tournament when I was thirteen with my good friend Tony Levi — our coach was Mr. Boyd Mungu. Tony later represented King Country in the 1970's

Embarrassing Moments

Later on the old School of Mines building was moved from Raynors Road to Rugby Park at Huntly West. The building was to be utilised as a clubroom for the local Rugby club and for use by various other organisations. One such body was the Huntly West Scout Group of which I was a member. One night after attending scouts and leaving to go home, probably around seven o'clock, I was bursting for a leak. The rugby field was also utilised for grazing cattle and sheep so the field had been divided up into separate areas by electric fences. We were all aware of this fact, but being young and having other things on my mind and bursting for a leak, plus the fact that it was a very dark night I pulled out little willie, and promptly leaked on the fence, which of course happened to be turned on. Whether it knocked me unconscious or not I don't know, I just remember waking up and wondering whether I had just been castrated or a hit by a bus. I honestly thought that would be the end of any fatherhood dreams I may have had. Of course at that age I was too embarrassed to tell anyone.

Another embarrassing incident was when I used to deliver the morning papers. Another way I used to make a quid. I would have been thirteen or 14 years old at the time. I used to deliver quite a few papers, probably up to one hundred and fifty, the papers were loaded into saddle bags made out of heavy green canvas and slung over the bar of the bike. When you have seventy five papers either side of the bike you ride bow legged. For some reason probably due to my slight build I had problems with this and in wet weather I would get chaffed very badly at the top of my legs. One day when my mother was talking to Mrs. Baker our neighbour at the time, mum was telling her I had badly chaffed thighs. Mrs. Baker asked me what had caused it, so without thinking I replied that my bags were rubbing my legs, mum burst out laughing and when Mrs. Baker saw the funny side so did she. I spent considerable time explaining what I meant and that they certainly did not hang down that far.

Another time I developed a boil on my butt, probably from continual riding of the bike in an unusual fashion — bowlegged. Anyway, I refused to let mum squeeze the boil — the way they were treated in those days — I think she enjoyed that chore. At the time we had a very close family friend, Shirley Kohi. Shirley would have been in her late twenties or early thirties at the time, and it was decided that she would do the dastardly chore. So shorts and underpants down and bent over the back of a chair, you know the type with the open slates at the back. Here I am bent over a chair, everything on show, probably not a pretty sight but I was more worried about the pain I was going to

experience. Shirley must have squeezed a bit hard and I let out a scream and lunged forward causing the chair to fall. There I was lying prone over the top of the chair on the floor with the family jewels caught underneath. How I ever produced children after that is a total mystery to me.

Shirley was a great 'mate' who even accompanied me on my paper rounds at five-thirty in the mornings during the winter months. The reason for her presence was, in winter the temperature could get as low as three degrees celcius and my poor little mitts used to freeze. More importantly I couldn't roll my cigarettes. In those days we kids couldn't afford tailor-mades so we brought Park Drive tobacco and cigarette papers and rolled our own. My problem was when my hands got cold I couldn't roll cigarettes, so I used to take Shirley along to carry out that important function. Fourteen year olds smoking! What the hell at 60 years old and still alive and no major illnesses throughout my life and what an exciting life it has been, full of highs and lows. If my time was up tomorrow I would not be disappointed — why? Because I would be dead, and would not feel or think anything.

Did I ever do anything wrong or untoward? Of course I did, but normally on my own, so no witnesses. Anyway I certainly would not air too much of my dirty washing for all to see.

Coal the Wealth of the Town

'I was born one morning when the sun didn't shine' this was probably or should have been the theme song for most of the male population during the nineteen forties, fifties, sixties and seventies. During those years it appeared that just about everyone either worked in the mines or their livelihood depended on them. The Rotowaro, Alison, Pukemiro, Glen Afton, Kimihia opencast and the carbonette factory made up the main ones, the Boyd family owned a smaller mine in the area, their son Peter was in my class at High School. During those years the mines would have been the largest employer in Huntly. Very few of these mines remain today. The opencast at Kimihia, now called the East Mine, The old Rotowaro and Alison now mined by opencast methods and logically called the West Mine. I believe there is another in the same area.

There were large bike sheds at the two main stations on the Glen Afton branch line, one on the east side opposite the old courthouse on the left hand side of the rail track; close to where the Veterinary building is

to day. The other being on the west side of the river at the rear of the Huntly West School play ground and on the south side of the rail track. This was a favourite place where when we bought a packet of craven A cigarettes and smoked them. I remember one time after the movies Paul Mason and I indulged ourselves with a pack and then attempted to smoke the whole lot in one foul swoop — I have never felt so sick in all my life, Paul reckoned I turned a sickly shade of green. I must have had poor 'won't power' in those days (I won't take up smoking) as I still smoke today.

Back to the sheds, they could hold close too one hundred bicycles. During those early years, bicycles were the predominant mode of transport to and from work for the miners. They would ride from their homes to the railway stations where they would catch the train to the mines. The trains left from at seven o'clock in the morning from the Huntly side and twenty past seven on the Huntly West side — this was also the reason we had to deliver the papers so early in the morning — the miners would be pretty upset if you were late. Across the track from the bike sheds at Huntly West was the local station, I never remember buying any tickets from the station but I presume in the early days they would have. In fact I can not remember any staff manning the station, although when I later worked for the railways I remember being sent to sweep them out. These sheds were demolished sometime in the late eighties or early nineties, the exact date I am unaware of as by that time I was fully settled into life in Papua New Guinea. Of course being only used in the mornings and late

afternoons meant we had another great area to play our children's games mentioned earlier in the book.

Other major employers in town then were the Railways, the Brick Works and to a certain extent Harry Alders timber yard.

Mining

Yes, I also did a spree in the mines — the Alison in the mid to late sixties. Working in the mine in those days was like belonging to a very large family. You are all at the mercy of Mother Nature when working underground. The miners were paid by the tonnage of coal they mined and sent to the surface, truckers were paid a contract rate that was proportional to the miner's rate. As a 'trucker' our job was to push mini coal wagons referred to as skips to the mine face from a collection point and then push the full ones back. After pushing about fifty skips in a five to six hour day you were pretty well whacked. Miners such as Ron Maki and Tui Tiananga were a couple of the hardest working and highest paid miners during my time at the mine; they could fill fifty plus skips every day. Needless to say their truckers had to be swapped on a regular basis including myself. At the time I worked in the mine Mr. Tom Glendenning was the manager and Wilf Cairns was one of the Underviewers I also remember the name Palmer.

One of mates at the time was Allan Pernell (Red) who lived down the road from us at the electrical substation that his Stepfather managed. I remember

one particular instance when we played what we thought at the time was a practical joke on one of the miners. Miners were always arguing over skips and always wanted a fair share each. One particular miner would, at the end of each shift push a half a dozen skips up the haul road to his coal face; this would allow a quick start to the next day and thus increase his output whilst the other miners had to wait until more skips arrived via the main haulage line. We thought this was rather unfair and decided to teach him a lesson. In some areas in the mine the seams rose quite quickly which would have meant pushing skips a long way up very steep inclines, to alleviate this a 'jig' was constructed. For the uninitiated a 'jig' is a mechanical apparatus not to dissimilar to a cable car, whereby the weight of one car pulls the other up. In this particular system full skips are coupled together at the top and connected to a wire rope; this rope in turn is connected to a line of empty skips at the bottom. When the full ones are pushed over the rise they pull up the empty ones, the speed of the skips is slowed by means of a brake. The brake consisted of a steel drum (pulley) around which the cable was fed, by tightening the drum by means of winding up on a steel handle the speed was controlled. In our warped or minds we decided to hide the brake handle. So as we walked out at the end of the shift we hid the handle. The miner came out, pushed the skips over the edge and then went to apply the brake. No brake handle so I presumed he would have run like hell. He would have had six empty skips hurtling up the hill at him and anyone at the bottom would have had six flying towards them. The end result was a tangled mess at the top and

bottom of the jig, and yes, we did get into trouble, I think we were given a few days off to contemplate our stupidity. At the time we thought it was great fun, I now realise just how dangerous it was, someone could have been seriously injured or even killed.

Working in the mine was a great experience and am thankful I took the opportunity to do so, some of the friends I made at that time I would still class as friends today. It was the time when I was introduced into communal showering other than football showers – you didn't drop your soap or at least didn't bend over to pick it up — you could end up singing in the local choir.

The Railways

Stationed in Huntly at the time were up four coal fired steam engines. The engines were fully utilised hauling coal from the mines to eventually be coupled onto the larger trains on the main truck line to eventually end up at various locations throughout New Zealand and around the world.

The railway complex at that time stretched from the railway crossing at the north of Huntly approximately where the courthouse now stands and went as far south as the Tanui Bridge. It would have been at least 150m wide. The railways would have employed close to one hundred people during the boom years.

I mention elsewhere that my first job was on the railways and like mining an enjoyable occupation, even if I was the lowest of low. The uniform swam on me and probably made me look like something from out of a comedy series. The trousers were made of heavy navy blue serge and baggy as hell, the coat was similar and the hat just never fitted, it was lucky I had protruding ears similar to Prince Charles. I always knew there was something regal about me.

My duties included all the jobs that everyone else didn't want to do, or that's what I thought at the time. Scrubbing the floors at the station, cleaning windows and toilets and any other demeaning job they could think of. The toilets were the old pay a penny job, the disinfectant I used was a foul smelling government issue, this I used to throw all over the place and then wet the whole area with a fire hose then scrub my heart out then complete the job by hosing the lot out and finish off by scrubbing the toilet seats. Mind you, I reckon I had the cleanest toilets in town. Come to think of it they were most probably the only public toilets then.

Other duties required me to attend the express trains as they arrived, removing all the luggage and cargo from the Guards Van then pushing it on an old railway trolley to the parcels office and unloading it. I would also be required to clean the carriages which serviced the Rotowaro — Glen Afton branch line. During that period the Railways was one of the main means of transport utilised for travel between Auckland and Wellington and similar with the Glen Afton line. Many a tale has been told of the railway pie and coffee especially the cups which I reckon would have made good material to mix with cement to make concrete.

It was also commonly accepted that there was always an increase in children born during the summer and autumn. This was due to the early morning express train that used to pass through Huntly at half past five in the morning. The miners would be woken up by the whistle and then thought it was a waste of time to go

back to sleep before getting up at six o'clock — so just rolled mum over.

My salary during those early years was a princely sum of ten and three quarter pence per hour this was later increased to one shilling, three and three quarter pence per hour after I had completed my probationary period of six months.

As you can imagine being a fifteen year old I was often the butt of a lot of jokes. On one particular occasion a couple of the boys Jim Rutene and Graham Coates strung me up on one of the hooks in the back of the parcels office, removed my trousers and underpants then called out to the Receptionist – Typist who happened to be Rosie Kearny to come and get something, very embarrassing.

The railway family as I like to refer to it as was a very close fraternity. We had cricket and rugby teams and would compete with other railway stations throughout the upper North Island.

Some of the names I remember are: Bob Cooper, Jim Rutene, Sonny Awa, Sonny Tauriki, Raku (Goods Shed), Joe Mestrom, Willie Turner, Tubby Turner, Floyd Davies, Kelvin Williams (brother), Jimmy Hogan, Graham Coates, Alby Porter, I must not forget old Eli Broadhurst the crossing keeper whom I had to relieve on his day off and of course Rosie Kearny. My apologies to all those persons whose names I can't recall, the brain cells are quickly dying off quicker than I would like to admit.

All that is left now is memories even the station has been removed to make way for State Highway One.

Huntly Township

This section is taken entirely from the memories I have from my early years, I have not cheated by either talking to others or raiding the Library Archives. There will probably be a few errors or people and business's over looked, my apologies. I will also add snippets of other memories that these names awaken in my beer sodden brain.

Start at the Tainui Bridge and working my way north, first there was the bridge store owned by Roy Sheeran, across the railway lines from the store was four or five Railway houses where from memory Paul Mason's Grand Parents or Aunty lived; the Blair's.

The next business I can recall is the Black Smiths owned by Mr. White. The Whites lived in Semple Street and I can still remember the time I was being chased by his son, his name has long since gone. Anyway I was a lot younger than him and I was pretty scared, and looking back over my shoulder I promptly ran smack bang into a power pole. I do however remember his sister Shirley. I don't know what it is about me but I can always remember the girls' names

but forget the boys. May be it just proves I was more interested in girls at that age than I care to admit.

The next place I recall after that is the St Josephs School. As non Catholic children we were pretty ignorant about the Catholic Religion. We had heard terrible stories about the way children at the school were treated and were terrified of the place (children's fantasies). We would literally run for our life if a Nun happened to be approaching. We referred to them as penguins for obvious reasons.

The next store I remember is the small shop opposite George Smiths Car Sales and Garage. Next door to the store was the most popular building in town, the Undertakers — everyone was dying to get there. The Undertaker at the time was Mr. McMahon later managed by his eldest son. I also played League with the younger brother but his name escapes me. In later years they sponsored our club Huntly United. The best and fairest at the end of the season received a coffin and free service — just joking, they were very good sponsors and lived just behind our clubrooms at Davies Park.

Next in line at the point where the railway bridge crossed the Highway was Dennis Snapes, Radiator Repairs – still there today and managed by his son of the same name.

Across the road from Snapes was the Court House, the building is still there today and utilised by, I believe a service organisation. Now the going gets harder.

The next the memory can recall is Steels Watchmakers Shop. The son Richard was in my class at school, and they lived along Harris Street not far from the new Bridge.

After that was Shead's Real Estate, later to move into town proper near Atkinson's Dairy. Across the road from them was the Electricity Department building.

How could I ever forget the Berlie factory, the major employer of the female population in the area. What was the nickname given to the girls that worked there? Now I remember — 'Berlie Bags' spoken in an affectionate way, after all my sister would have worked there at one time or other. Garth Sweetman was later employed there as a technician, much to the envy of the rest of us.

Next to the Berlie building was a fish shop, many a great meal was had there. The fact it was across the road from the Huntly Hotel meant a huge trade from the imbibers of that evil drink. During six o'clock closing days I can imagine a lot of households would have had fish and chips for dinner when dad did not make it home in time for shopping.

The Huntly Hotel in its hey day was the place to be as other than the Returned Services Association Club and the Workings Men's Club the hotel was the main venue for your after work meeting and imbibing of your favourite poison. It consisted of the main Public Bar at the front, the Cats Bar or the bar where females were allowed to drink — male chauvinists in

those days reckon all women should be kept barefoot and pregnant and in the kitchen. The other Public bar was at the rear and referred to as the Railway Bar as it was mostly used by railway workers. Of course no hotel is complete without a Lounge Bar, this was situated near the main entrance. The only management name I can relate to the Hotel is Bird. My sister Pat worked there at one time as did Shirley Kohi, Willie Tianunga's daughter, the eldest McFetteridge girl and there was an elderly Maori woman who was the chef whose name I can't recall, I remember we all called her Aunty Pu who lived down the end of Hakanoa Street, she was truly a lovely lady. Even I worked there at one stage, part time, cleaning flagons; remember them twelve shillings and sixpence a crate of five — two and a half gallons of draught beer.

Along from the fish shop was a small shop attached to the Lyceum Hall. This was the Taxi Stand shop and run by Mr. Atkinson prior to his moving to the centre of town. I believe the Lyceum Hall was built in remembrance of the Ralph Mine disaster by the miners when they were setting up a union in the area. It was well utilised for all sorts of activities besides miners meetings, skating, ballroom dancing, flower shows and probably other activities I am unaware of.

Across the road was the Taxi stand. (Uncle) Tommy Morgan, Jimmy Woods, Noel Stow and Ken Dodds are just a few of the names I recall who were drivers. Unbeknown to many and myself at the time I believe Tommy Morgan originally from the Tuakau area was in fact a relative. His father or Grandfather was my

Grandfather's brother William or Tom, this I have only learnt since catching up with my genealogy.

Next to the taxi stand on the same side of the road was the Farmers Trading Company. What a great Family Store it was. Mr. Yardley is a name I associate with the Farmers whether that is correct or not but it's what I remember. Another large employer of the female population including my sisters and at one time they all worked there together. I recall mum signing over her Family Benefit to the store to cover either the lay buys or clothes she had purchased on credit to ensure we all had school uniforms or to ensure we were reasonably well dressed.

Back across the road we find the Post Office erected in the early 1900's. A lovely old building with class probably the biggest structure erected in the area at the time. I seem to relate the name Chew with the building, may have been the Post Master. I believe it should never have been demolished and kept as a Heritage building. Sad though it is, progress waits for no one.

Next to the Post Office was the Bookshop owned by Bill Lydon, this was where we purchased most of our school books and for me a great place to purchase stamps for my stamp collection. It now houses the Lotto Shop, another original building. From a photograph I have I can just make out the words 'The Lounge' probably a fore runner to the Huntly Hotel or a tea house as the name suggests.

I am getting dizzy with all this crossing the road, maybe I will just keep going down one side then back up the other until we come back to the Farmers. Next to the Book Shop was the Butchers – still there today and now operated by one of the Tait's. For love nor money I cannot remember the original owner, I probably will at three in the morning and then forget it again.

The next I can recall is a building in between the Lotto shop and the building used by Fry, Wilson and Todd, Barristers. There was also a Photographer somewhere around here, upstairs I think. Next to it was another building that at one time housed the Huntly Press — the local rag. (A building that I missed earlier on was situated next to the old court house where the press moved to later on). Any way the next building was Hindman's Chemist or was it one store back, Ross Hindman another class mate at High school. He was with Gerald and John Smith and 'Sharky' Koolen part of the great band The Rumour that was very popular in the 60's.

Down the side of the building a few small shops were located. One of them was occupied by a musician who sold musical instruments, he was sometimes employed on cruise ships as part of the on board band. His name also escapes me, damn those cells.

Across the vacant area and we arrive at the Milk Bar come Tea Rooms. I only ever remember it being managed by the Atkinson's. The daughter Barbara I can recall. The next building I don't recall although I seem to recall a bank somewhere in that area. Near

the front of the building was where Bill Moffat ran his Barber Shop before turning his hand to the Jewelry trade. Somewhere around this area was also Bert Shead's Real estate office.

The next on the list is Les Kosoof and sons. Still run by the family and apparently commenced business in 1926 as the date on the top of the building depicts.

Somewhere around here was the Lynch Butchery the exact position totally gone from the memory, or was that the owner of the other butchers.

I think the next building where the ANZ Bank is now, housed a Shoe Store, again damn that last bottle. Actually the next Building I recall is the Wilson and Shaw building where Johnson's Menswear operated from where I worked in 1966. The Manager at the time was Howard Strange, a great man. His wife was a very good golfer and I believe they still have a golf tournament named in her honour.

Next store was a Green Grocer or as we call them today vegetable shop run by a Hindu or Shi Lankan family. This is where we purchased our 'speckled fruit' after the movies. Wonderful family and I do remember the son was a very good cricketer.

Woolworths is next on the list where the paint shop is now located.

After that was Robert's Hair Dressers run by Bob Roberts. The family trade is ably being carried on by his son Trevor.

Memory don't fail me now. I think the next one was the ANZ Bank.

Then came Leo Hamers men's outfitters. Leo Hamer lived in Tither Street in Huntly West.

Then came Roberts Bike Shop owned by Gus Robert's (my Brother In-law) father.

After that came Adams Bruce the biscuit shop where as kids we purchased our broken biscuits after the Saturday morning matinees at the picture theatre.

Somewhere in this area was a small electrical repair shop, I can see the face but the name eludes me. Tom rings a bell. Isn't it marvelous how we always say, 'I know the face but cannot recall the name', we never say 'I know the name but cannot recall the face'.

Somewhere here there was another store maybe Allens Furnishings, I don't mean Meyers from across the road.

Next that I can recall is the Doctors surgery. Dr Willoughby practised here with Dr Tilson or was he located down Hakanoa Street.

The shops after that which I can recall in the area were probably constructed in the early 70's.

Smiths Shoe store was next where the TAB and bar is today.

Allen's Fabrics are situated next door to that shop. Mo Allen the proprietor was in my young day's one of my scout leaders.

The old TAB was located next door down a narrow corridor between two buildings.

After that I only remember Meyer's residence until we come to Gills Garage, almost forgot that one.

Next to Gills was a Milk Bar Dairy – still there today. "Two Gob Stoppers Please", "that will be one penny thank you", great days.

After that I remember Grey Sweetman's Saddlery. Son, Garth was also in my class and also went to Scouts together. I remember on time his father paid for my scout camp trip at Lake Waikarimoana, if he hadn't I would not have made the trip. Martin has successfully carried on the family tradition.

The last on the list on the west side and I only remember it until about 1964 was a small car sales opposite the bell crossing.

The brain will never be the same again and I am only half way through. I certainly hope the idea of writing this book has not been suggested by my subconscious mind fighting against the onslaught of Dementia as I do forget small things some time. You know the type of thing, head of into a room and then forget why you went there in the first place. Hopefully its just old age and maybe I should accept it

gracefully. I would, but living in Papua New Guinea is like living back in the 70's and 80's or at least the social life is.

Heading back up the other side we first come to the Oak Service Station owned by the Koolens. Same again, 'Sharky' Koolen's family. One of the brothers married the eldest McDonald girl from Raynors road. Why do I remember that? I went out with the younger sister at one time, her brother Sandy still teaches at the Ngaruawahia School.

There was a couple of buildings past there but they escape recall, I do however remember a tire shop there, later on run by Mo Perry, son of Sam Perry the one time proprietor of the Billiard Saloon. Another building I missed in the middle of town was the Billiard Saloon, situated next door to Kossoofs. A place I spent many misspent hours playing Kelly Pool for two shillings and sixpence a game or pins. Names like Pat Peri, Butler Berryman, Whip Hetet, Trench Turner, Harry Waikai are a few who spring to mind.

That sorted we move onto a car sales and garage on the corner, the name escapes once again.

Now I remember I think the next one was Allen's Fabric, then came Myers Furnishings then Ces Adams Four Square store. Next door to that was a small gardening shop owned by an elderly couple. The husband was in fact the District Commissioner for Scouting.

The Anglican Church was next I believe, I am sure someone will correct me if I am wrong. What a pity they pulled that one down, what a great edifice it was. You may have guessed by now that I am an admirer of old architecture. I am glad that someone took the time to sketch a lot of the old buildings before they were lost to hands progress and unscrupulous 'land barons'. You can see these sketches or at least a few of them in the tea rooms near the town centre.

Doug Morris, which is next on the list would have seen many residents buying their white goods or electrical equipment and probably their first television sets from his store.

Vacant lot, no not my brain, the next area.

The next building is really a sore point with me. Arriving back in Huntly in the mid to late nineties the first time for many years, I discovered the Town Hall gone. The building was built to commemorate the Ralph Mine Disaster in the early 1900's. It had character, many a marriage may have started within its walls, after all where could you take your sweetheart out for the night and sit in the dark with her. There wasn't much more to do in town other than the hotel or if you happened to be rich enough to own a car, head off to Hamilton to a dance. As kids that was the highlight of our week, Saturday matinees. We all rushed to get the front seats (peanut gallery). How we didn't end up with sore necks I will never know, the screen was about eight or nine feet above our seats. At the entrance was a small store where we brought our ice creams and lollies. Then there was

the vender who stood at the front during the interval selling ice creams. As you got older you progressed to watching the films from the back rows or upstairs. On the left of the building and attached to was also another small shop.

Down the alley besides the hall was a pie cart, man did they make great hamburgers. I seem to recall another one somewhere in town in the 60's.

Dave Hall Menswear was next, there was a shop before then but cannot recall who owned it.

Challinor's Bookshop came next and again was an old established company in town. I think most people will recall old Bert and his wife, now the One Dollar shop.

The Chinese green grocers were next and the store is still operating today, run by either the children or others of the same lineage. Although it carries a lot more items than it did then.

After that came the fish shop Southern Cross. Here we brought our scraps as kids on Saturdays and if we pooled our money, three pence each we could get quite a big packet, all wrapped up in newspaper of course.

Jurisich's shoe store was next, I went to school with one of the girls but again damn it, blank.

After that, or was it before it, was Shand's Bakery. The lovely smell of baked bread early in the morning

was great. One of the oldest businesses's established in the town. Then last but not least Todd's Jewelers shop. Their name is still readable on the top of the building.

Thank god that's over the brain is going into overdrive attempting to try and recall events and places which over the years I have misfiled in my brain. About time to let it have a rest and recuperate. Maybe tomorrow it will come up with some more great events and names. No it's still going, I forgot the Railway Goods shed at the back of the shops.

I suppose while it is still working I should mention the dairy and butchers shop along Hakanoa Street. Then there was Fred's store at the end of Bailey street, all still operating today.

Where to next William St, the Church of England, Workingmen's Club and opposite the RSA the Masonic Lodge. Next door to the lodge was Simpson's bus depot again all still in place. Along the road at the bend was Cross country Rentals. Behind that was the Rugby league grounds where United and Huntly South had there club rooms, United club was on the northern side and still there today but unused. Huntly South rooms were just inside and on the south side of the main gates. Huntly South later changed their location to the present position.

The last Shop I can recall was up towards Starr Town at the top of Raynors Road. The only other building of any note was the 'Baby factory' the Maternity Home, now closed down. Sure as hell I've missed something

or someone. What the heck, surely the readers will allow me a bit of lassitude in my old age.

Huntly West

The Huntly West shopping area or as mum called it the village consisted of a number of shops – Hewitt and John's, Guy kings, Tony's Fish Shop, a Chemist shop, Dr kjestrups surgery behind. Mrs. Ruffins store pretty well completed the shops I can remember. Later on a Post office was built where the old miner's bike shed was located. There was the Semple Street store owned by Mr. Jimmy Woods and another which I believe is still operating today near the Wahi Pa. I seem to recall another store near the river in the vicinity of the area where the new bridge was located, but cannot recall the owners name. I must not forget the Huntly West Hall, a place where I spent many nights dancing to the music of Duskie Nepia and his band. The other band I enjoyed very much was a group in which Pat Kahu Rangiawha (guitar), now there was a person who knew how to play a guitar and John (drums). In the same area was the skating rink, remember the skates that had four wheels. Then there was the park which had swings, slide and see saws, many an idle hour was spent there. Of course what park would be complete without a pond? The difference with ours was that it was just a large hole

dug in the ground and only filled up when it rained. Probably not the way the town fathers had planned it. However it was a great place to catch frogs and tadpoles, and I never did develop warts as my mother used to warn us.

Who did we play with in those days? Anyone who would care to join us, or whoever invited us to play with them. There was the Bakers next door — Patricia and Arthur and their little brother, Marilyn and Grant King, of course Raynor Benton, Maureen McFetridge, Vicky and Jacky Wilson, Robert, Lenny and Kerry Woods, Paul, John and the twins Donna and David Masson. Rae and Billy Rush, Brian Nuttal, Maxine Allerdyce, Brian and Gerald Dodds, Peter Hamer, Paddy and Spencer Mathews and Bobby Aulsbrook. Then there was Joe and Alex Dillon, the Smith Twins. There was many more but I think that will suffice. Must not forget the Earby boys who lived next to the Masons at that time.

Huntly West Primary School

'Enter To Learn, Go Forth To Serve'

What a great motto that is. Without knowledge you cannot serve to your fullest capacity, or reach your full potential in life. All you children out there take time out to consider what that motto means, and more specifically what it means to yourself.

The Huntly West School was built in 1955 and opened in 1956. I was eight years old when we transferred from the Huntly Primary, probably attending standard one at the time. The teachers I can I recall from those early years are, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Hopkins, Mr. Hitchcock, Mrs. Englebritson, Miss Pitt, Mr. Morgan (Taffy), Mr. Sutcliffe and Mr. Boyd Mungu

What sort of memories do I have? Nothing but pleasant ones, even though like a lot of children of the day I wagged fairly often. The temptation to wag school was always to great - just to beat the system. I didn't wag because I hated school, far from it, usually

because I hadn't done my homework and I hated the strap — especially on a cold morning. I hated the mornings; there was always a lot of books piled up on the teachers desk. If your work was okay your book would be on your desk, those children who did not have their book meant your work was not up to scratch. This meant you would line up at the front of the class to get your punishment which usually consisted of a couple of wacks across the palm of your hand — it stung like hell. We never told our parents — for fear they might give us another one.

Winter in those days was a cold and dreary time, there was never very much you could do out doors so a lot of time was spent indoors. We all walked to school then and while walking to school we used to walk through the puddles breaking the ice. Some of the boys would amuse themselves by putting ice down the back of the girls' dresses. Small things amuse small minds I suppose.

I still remember taking our shoes off and walking to school barefoot so our shoes would not get wet; this also meant we could play in the icy puddles. We must have been pretty tough in those days.

I pretty much enjoyed my time at Huntly West School as I really do not have any bad memories from that time. This could be due to the very competent teachers that taught us through that era. At the time I thought they were probably too strict. However the discipline they instilled in us I realise now gave us a good grounding for the tortuous road of life. Without it

we would probably all turned out rotten kids or least worse than what we eventually ended up as.

The teacher I enjoyed the most was probably Mr. Hitchcock. His plays which I believe he wrote himself or adapted to suit school plays, we had to act out were terrific. I remember one in particular, the name eludes me but it was a western theme and included a horse called 'Old Faithful'. We had to sing songs and one particular song I still remember today "Old Faithful". My part was to lead the 'horse' on stage, too simple, no — not for me. I lead the 'horse' out the wrong time and had the teacher tearing his hair out. Another play I enjoyed was the 'Mikado' — remember Nanky Poo.

Our School day started with an assembly on the netball courts, raising the New Zealand Flag and singing God Save the Queen and the National Anthem and then marching to class with music playing on an old wind up gramophone in the background. How many schools do that today?

In a sense the school probably has a lot to answer for as I believe I am what I am today due to the lessons and discipline that was taught and instilled in me during those early years. Without it I would have probably turned out to be better person. Just joking without the discipline and education I received there I would not have achieved anything in life. A big thank you to all the teachers who had a part in my education during those years — even though at the time, I hated the lot of you.

In 1981 the School had its twenty-fifth reunion. I did not attend this one as I was working in the highlands of Papua New Guinea in the Chimbu (Simbu) Province. By all accounts it was reasonably successful. My three sisters and older brother Kelvin attended, however I have included a photograph of the event — it should bring back a few memories.

Early in 2006 I received an email from Rangipaeroa King-Mosen the Principal of the Huntly West School. She informed me of the up coming reunion and invited me to register my interest in attending the Fiftieth Reunion. If there was sufficient interest it would be held over the Queens Birthday weekend. I promptly emailed back my confirmation to her requesting further information. The next item on the agenda was to ring my sister Patricia and ask her if she and the other sisters would be attending. To my amazement she did not know anything about it, and she lives in Huntly.

It appeared that the first people contacted were those registered on a web site called 'Old Friends' or 'Reunion'. So I emailed my registration forms down to my other sister Bernice who delivered them with my fees. Next time I called her she informed me that they would be attending. Apparently a lot of other ex students from our era had also registered. Our family was part of the inaugural students of the school, so it was a must that we all attended.

I flew out of Port Moresby on the 30th of June via Brisbane for Auckland. Arrived in Auckland at 12.30 am the next Morning. I had previously arranged for a

service vehicle to meet me at the airport — I normally use Road Cat out of Hamilton. As is usual they had forgotten about me, so I had to sit around at the airport until the next shuttle arrived from Hamilton at 3.30am. Hell it was freezing. Every half an hour I would brave the antarctic like conditions and go outside for a cigarette. I thought god forbid, I will not last the week out. I had not felt so cold in probably six years. I am a warm climate person, that why I live in Papua New Guinea.

Eventually I arrived in Huntly at Starr Street at about 5.30am. My elder sister Patricia was looking after her daughter Joanne's house. After a couple of cups of hot coffee I started to thaw out. Then it was catching up on the news for the next 3 to 4 hours.

I have always maintained the easiest way to get over jet lag is to go out and partake of the local breweries fine products, so that was next on the list, (My story and I'm sticking to it). I wrapped myself up as warm as I could, considering coming from a tropical climate I did not own a lot of warm clothes and headed off to the TAB which doubles as a bar. The walk down to the town area brought back memories and I found my mind wandering back to the early years. As I passed the houses in starr Street and Raynors Road my mind recalled the different families who had previously occupied them. Haycocks, Powells, Dr Willouby in Dudley Avenue, the old police station, where the school of mines used to be and sadly where the Railway Station used to be, great memories.

After about six handles and not being used to the New Zealand brews I was almost standing on my head. After much deliberation and another couple of handles I came to the conclusion that I should call it a day and wend my weary way home. That in itself was to be quite a feat as by that time the town had started to get busy. I must have met at least a dozen people who wanted to talk, which in turn extended the time of the trip home. I never remember Raynors Road being that steep, hell it felt like Mt Everest. Home at last and time for a sleep.

The next couple of days was spent catching up with my other sisters, Bernice and Pauline, which as previously mentioned is a experience not to be missed when they get together.

Eventually Saturday morning arrives, what a time to start a reunion, 8 o'clock on a mid winters morning. Didn't they know I came all the way from the tropics, how inconsiderate.

We drove along Harris Street until we came across a Maori Warden who incidentally was an old mate — Hemi Marsh. Hemi directed us into the rear of the school area. The entrance was next to the house where the Harts (I think) used to live and onto the playground area where as a child I had played cricket and football. Looking around, the school had not changed that much, the old swimming pool was still there but much worse for wear, a few extra buildings had been added including the an assembly hall. One item I very quickly noticed missing was the old

Railway Station at the end of the play ground, plenty of memories about that building.

We then proceeded to the front of the school near the office and stood and waited for the bell to ring. Most of us used the time to catch up with old friends. Some I recognised straight away others I had no idea who they were. I couldn't understand how they all had got so old — of course I didn't look any older. They probably thought the same about me. My son Jeffery had attended the school in the eighties and had traveled up from Whakatane to spend some time with me while I was in country. He took the opportunity to attend the reunion at the same time.

All the cigarette smokers were lined up along the footpath on Paki Street — no smoking on school grounds. Some things never change, at least we don't have to sneak away and hide to have a cigarette now.

It wasn't to long before the bell rang and we headed towards the old assembly area. Here we were greeted by Tai Moana and Mr. Bob Tukere a long term resident of Huntly and School Chairman. The welcome took the form of a powhiri or traditional welcome. This took a lot of us by surprise as during the early years of the school other than learning the more popular Maori songs and learning the basic history of New Zealand. Granted, most of us would have experienced or been involved in a powhiri many times during our life. It would have probably made more sense had they organised a roll call. A roll call would have brought back a few more memories, especially as the names of persons who were not in

attendance. However I suppose in this enlightened era we must be politically correct, we may offend the minority.

Once the welcoming speeches were over we were free to mingle and catch up with old friends and classmates. It appeared that the majority of attendees were from the earlier years — our era 1956 to 1960. Many of us were disappointed that a lot more of the ex students who still reside in Huntly did not attend the reunion, more so when many of us had traveled great distances to attend and would have enjoyed catching up with them.

Walking around and checking out the photo gallery and classrooms gave me quite a buzz as it most likely did to the others. The classrooms seemed so much larger when I was younger.

Retiring to a large tent especially erected for the function we were treated to a very well organised meal. The caterers did a fine job. Speeches were then the order of the day and they were certainly not boring ones. Most speakers recounted their days at school, their likes and dislikes. I especially enjoyed Barbara Baxter's little speech, mind you she was never slow to voice her opinion.

Later that night a social evening was held. The night I believe was reasonably well organised and regardless of what the others may have thought, I enjoyed the evening. Most likely as they had an ample supply of my favourite beverage. Too soon the evening was over and we trudged off home to recollect our

thoughts and stow away our memories for the time when as great grand parents we can bore our great grand children with stories of our youth. That is if we live that long. I certainly hope that I am still around for the 75th reunion as I am certainly looking forward to it.

To all those persons who did not attend I can only say, you certainly missed out on a wonderful trip down memory lane. It may be something you will regret for the rest of your life.

To the organising committee thank you for the opportunity for the trip down memory lane. Well done. It has given me the chance to put pen to paper and write another book. At least when I get old and decrepit and suffering from Alzheimer's some one can read this book to me and who knows maybe it will help me to remember my past. But then, having Alzheimer's can not be that bad, as you get to meet some one new every few minutes.

Huntly West School
50th Jubilee Celebrations
Programme

- | | |
|-------|---|
| 8:30 | Registrations (All those registered need to collect tags which highlight entry details) |
| 9:00 | Powhiri (A bell – yes this should bring back memories! This will signal assembly time.) |
| 10:00 | Morning Tea (Just before morning tea we will have a group photo then move straight on to photo's in the decades. A good opportunity to mix and mingle) |
| 10:45 | Tree Planting (A bell will ring to signal that we need to gather for a short service before our tree planting begins) |
| 11:15 | Memory Lane Classrooms will be opened for a walk through of those classrooms currently in operation) |
| 12:00 | Lunch. A bell will signal that it is time to gather for kai karakia at the marquee site for lunch. |
| 3:00 | End of Lunch. Classes will remain open for people to wander through. |

7:00 **Social Evening.** A bar will be set up in the marquee for the purchase of drinks. Our Bar Manager for the evening is Amelia Moana.

We will have a night of awesome entertainment with room to have a few drinks, chat and dance. This part of the evening will be held in the marquee. The hall has been set up as a quiet area where people can sit, drink and chat away from the entertainment. A light supper will be available during the evening which will be served in the hall .

11:30 **Social Evening Ends**

Attendees

Prior to the Celebrations these were those persons whom took the time out to register. Others may have attended but as I did not keep a list, I apologise to those who are not included on the list.

McKenzie <u>Ian</u> 1956 – 1957 Pakuranga AUCKLAND	Orewa AUCKLAND
Baylis <u>Annette</u> (nee Hovell) 1956 – 1960 PALMERSTON NORTH	Hopkins <u>Mark</u> 1957 – 1965 TE AWAMUTU Partner : Jo-Anne (L)
Payne <u>David</u> 1956 – 1960 HUNTLY	Picknell <u>Beverly</u> (nee Stow) 1956 – 1961 MORRINSVILLE Partner : Graham (L/S)
Roberts <u>Pauline</u> (nee Williams) 1956 – 1969 HUNTLY	Morland <u>Len</u> 1956 – 1958 HAMILTON
Williams <u>Patricia</u> 1956 – 1957 HUNTLY	Lewthwaite <u>Rosalie</u> (nee Rush) 1956 – 1961 TAURANGA Partner : Neville (L/S)
Edwards <u>Heather</u> (nee Pitt) 1957 – 1958	Fletcher <u>Judy</u>

(nee Sweetman)	1959 – 1967
1956 – 1957	WHAKATANE
Panmure	Partner : Rhoma (S)
AUCKLAND	
Nuttall <u>Alison</u>	Alder <u>Lorraine</u>
(nee Pethybridge)	(nee Lawson)
1956 – 1960	1956 – 1960
Diary Flat	DARGAVILLE
AUCKLAND	
Pethybridge <u>Brian</u>	Langlands <u>Christine</u>
1956 – 1963	(nee Rush)
Forest Hill	1956 – 1964
AUCKLAND	HUNTLY
Gilshnan <u>Sue</u>	Highland <u>Judith</u>
(nee Stewart)	(nee Wood)
1956 – 1961	1956 – 1961
RAGLAN	TE PUKE
Partner : Neil (S)	
Cameron Babara	Stow <u>Ron</u>
(nee Baxter)	1956 – 1957
1956 – 1960	PALMERSTON
Dannemora	NORTH
AUCKLAND	Partner : Betty (L/S)
Attewell <u>Cheryl</u>	Cryer <u>Raewyn</u>
(nee Robinson)	(nee Hovell)
1956 – 1957	1956 – 1962
HAMILTON	NGARUAWAHIA
Partner : Glenn (L/S)	
Horlock <u>Wayne</u>	Armstrong <u>Sharon</u>
	(nee Liddle)
	1956 – 1964
	Laingholm
	AUCKLAND

Ruston <u>Gary</u> 1956 – 1962 New South Wales AUSTRALIA	Clarks Beach AUCKLAND Partner : Joyce (L/S)
Williams <u>Noel</u> 1956 – 1960 PAPUA NEW GUINEA	Dillon <u>Joe</u> 1956 – 1960 New Castle AUSTRALIA Partner : Nanette (L/S)
Earby <u>Phillip</u> 1958 – 1966 HUNTLY Partner : Colleen (L)	Le Petit <u>Lynette</u> (nee Capper) 1956 – 1957 WELLINGTON
Priestley <u>Merilyn</u> (nee Mc Cormick) 1956 – 1959 WHANGAREI Partner : Geoffrey (L)	Van der Hulst <u>Shirley</u> (nee Anderson) 1956 – 1958 HAMILTON
Espin <u>Ruth</u> (nee Mc Ara) 1956 – 1958 TE PUKE	Hannah <u>Julie</u> (nee Stow) 1959 -1966 RAGLAN Partner : David (S) (also a teacher)
McIntosh <u>Greg</u> 1959 – 1967 TAUPO Partner : Lynette (S)	Hunter <u>Raewyn</u> (nee Watt) 1968 – 1976 HUNTLY
Heerdegen <u>Ted</u> Edward 1956 – 1960	Cuming <u>Patricia</u>

(nee Mc Kenzie)	
1963 – ...	
Manurewa	
AUCKLAND	
Hardy <u>Hilda</u>	1970's
(nee Critoph)	
1964 – 1971	
New South Wales	Rongo <u>Graham</u>
AUSTRALIA	1975 – 1984
	HUNTRY
Giles <u>Lynda</u>	Allwood <u>Miriam</u>
1967 – 1975	(nee Critoph)
THAMES	1970 – 1977
	Queensland
Holt <u>Babara</u>	AUSTRALIA
(nee Graham)	
1966 – 1974	
Papakura	Ashurst <u>Christine</u>
AUCKLAND	(nee Watt)
	1972 – 1980
	HUNTRY
Toving <u>Jacquiline</u>	
(nee McKenzie)	Ahu <u>Alison</u>
1960 – ...	1970 – 1978
Manurewa	HAMILTON
AUCKLAND	
	1980's
Brown Patricia	Tuker Moeroa
(<u>Trish</u>)	(nee Tiananga)
(nee Graham)	1980 – 1989
1968 – 1976	HUNTRY
HUNTRY	
Steel <u>Stephen</u>	Jeffery Williams
1963 – ...	1980-1981
HUNTRY	Whakatane

1990's	Koolen <u>Rosalie</u> (nee Hansen) 1961 – 1964 Teacher Partner : Frank (S)
Howell <u>Karen</u> (nee Brown) 1990 – 1995	HAMILTON
Andrew Howell 1988 – 1993 HAMILTON	Dunsmuir <u>Donna</u> (nee Harper) 1984 – 1993 Teacher WHANGAMATA
Staff	Earby <u>Val</u> 1956 - ... Teachers' Aid
Hopkins <u>Albert</u> 1956 -1965	HUNTLY
Foundation Staff Member and first Deputy Principal Partner : Ray (L) WHITIANGA	Rongo Heeni 1970's – 1980's Teachers' Aid HUNTLY
Stewart <u>Lily</u> 1956 – 19 86 Office Secretary HUNTLY	Rangipaeroa King- Mosen 1991 – current Principal Partner : Ralph ROTORUA
Aldridge <u>Freda</u> (nee Foster) 1961 – 1965 Teacher OHINEWAI	Parents of Students Graham <u>Jenny</u> 1990's and still going Parent Helper HUNTLY

	Partner : Lena
Steel <u>Margaret</u> 1960's...	
Parent Helper HUNTRY	Tukiri <u>Robert</u> Partner : Lena Chairman of Huntly West School Board of Trustees. HUNTRY
Moana <u>Suey</u> (Maurice) 1970's (L/S) Victoria AUSTRALIA	Mayor Harris <u>Peter</u> Partner : wife NGARUAWAHIA
Moana Nora 1970's Victoria (L/S) AUSTRALIA	Mahuta <u>Nanaia</u> Labour MP for Tainui Partner : husband
Unknown Year Watkins <u>Bernice</u> (nee Williams) (1956-1962) HUNTRY	Harawira Joe 1980's MC Past Teacher Partner Sharyn Assistant Principal
Morgan <u>Taurima</u> New South Wales AUSTRALIA	Moana Tai Past Pupil MC Partner Alison
Morgan <u>Waaka</u> New South Wales AUSTRALIA	Ellen Hobson Feb – May 1956 July – Dec 1966 Feb 1968 – Jan 2006 Partner : Son James
Invited Guests Tukiri <u>Robert</u>	

All Grown Up

At fifteen years old we all think we are adults, more so if you leave school around that age. Being no different to many other children my age and from a middle class family I left high school at fifteen. Not because I had to, but because I thought I was all grown up. At the time I thought what a great life I was going to have. Was I soon in for a rude and rather abrupt wakening. Ever tried getting a job when you only have an education as far as four months into form four? I couldn't get a job in the mine due to my age, an apprenticeship was out of the question due to lack of education. I couldn't bludge off my mother for the rest of my life so spent the next six months pounding the pavement in search of work. Eventually I managed, through my brother Kelvin, to secure a position with the Railways as a Junior Porter. My advice to children these day, learn whilst you have the opportunity. I

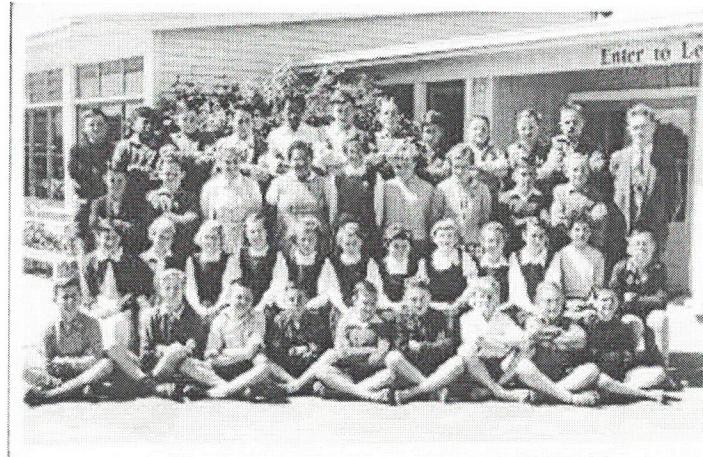
have now spent the best part of my life catching up on my education, which is no fun while your mates are out enjoying them selves. I have developed a saying 'work first and play later' if the hard work is done you can enjoy yourself with a clear conscience. What do I do now? Work hard and play harder.

What have I done since leaving school? I have worked on steam locomotives with the Railways, been a painter, no not an artist — I could not draw a straight line if I tried. Coal mining, road construction supervisor, civil engineering project manager, building construction project manager, cook, hotel manager soldier and sailor and menswear salesman are a few of the area I have worked in. For the last fifteen years I have been managing multi-million dollar projects both civil infrastructure and building construction. In my free time I have worked raising money for charities and similar organisations and presently write books (booklets) as a hobby.

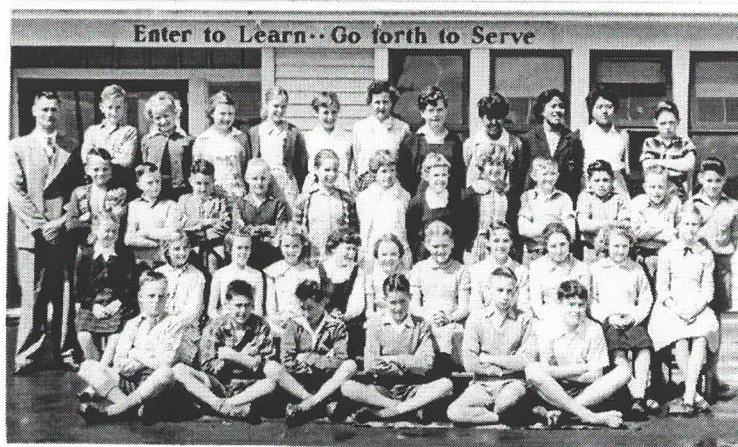
I have been President of the Papua New Guinea World Tae Kwon do Federation, Secretary, Selector Judiciary Chairman of the Port Moresby Rugby League and Southern Zone Provincial Rugby League. and Secretary–Handicapper of the Port Moresby Golf Club.

In January 2005 I was awarded the British Empire Medal for services to the community and charity in Papua New Guinea.

Photographs



Mr. Hitchcock's class 1959 or 1960



Mr. Hopkins's class 1960



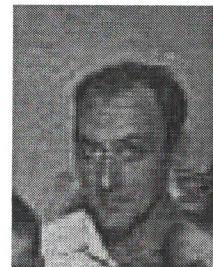
Reunion 1981



Huntly United Rugby League — Seniors 1996
60



Williams Clan 1954



Dad 1953