

MY SUPERSTAR WIFE

KATHY GRIFFITHS

...and her family



DAVID HAWKING

My Superstar Wife

Kathy Griffiths ... and her Family

David Hawking
`david.hawking@acm.org`

Text copyright © David Hawking 2023. Quotations and illustrations, as per individual acknowledgments. Photographs by David Hawking unless otherwise noted. For many of them, particularly old family photographs, the photographer isn't known.

The moral right of the author is asserted.

ISBN 978-0-6451743-8-0 PDF; 978-0-6451743-7-3 Print

Typeset in 11pt Palatino using L^AT_EX. Last edited: 24 August 2023

Cover design: Jack Griffiths-Hawking

Preface

It is no doubt rather unusual for someone to write a biography of their spouse. Three examples spring to mind: *John* by Cynthia Lennon, *Robert J. Hawke: A biography* by Blanche d'Alpuget, and *Bryce Courtenay: Storyteller* by Christine Courtenay.¹

Kathy is by no means a celebrity like those three biographical subjects but her interesting life story deserves to be told, and her contributions to mental health research deserve to be recognised. With her colleagues at ANU's Centre for Mental Health Research, she has helped improve the lives of countless people.

A long-term spouse has the advantage of knowing the subject better than any other biographer could, but the disadvantage of perhaps being unable to look at the subject from an objective distance. In compensation, that surely reduces the risk of drawing false conclusions because of incomplete data.

An unintended consequence of spouse authorship is that a lot of the material is inevitably also about the author. I have tried to restrict that material to what is clearly part of the Kathy story.

I wouldn't reveal dark secrets or shameful behaviour of my subject, but you can take my word that that wasn't a limitation. I have, however, been deliberately circumspect in writing about the bad behaviour, moral failings, and character flaws of some with whom Kathy has interacted.

The goal of this and my other histories is, "entertaining and accurate but not necessarily complete." I've included many links to online materials and tested them close to the time of publication. However, I have no way of guaranteeing that they will remain accessible. If you are unable to access such a link, all I can suggest is that you search for it on the WayBackMachine.²

Here, I've also written about Kathy's parents and grand-parents, and about our son. They have been influences on her life and are part of her story. My questions about her more distant forebears (whom Kathy never met) sparked in her an unprecedented interest in family history and unleashed her formidable research talents. She signed up for Ancestry.com and hunted down documents from libraries and births, deaths and marriages registries in many different jurisdictions. She's careful to confirm everything from primary sources, and not to rely on the truth of material posted on genealogical sites – "Married at six years old? I don't think so!"

Some of Kathy's ancestral discoveries are very interesting and I've highlighted them here, but this is essentially a biography of Kathy, rather than a family history. I'll leave it to Kathy to write the full family story.

I should point out that Kathy and I are not actually married. We have however been living together for very close to 50 years – four times as long as the median marriage duration for couples who divorce.³ I'm very proud to call her my wife, and hope we'll be together for a very long time to come.

¹At the time of writing of those books, Cynthia and John Lennon were divorced and John was already dead, Bob Hawke was still married to Hazel, and Bryce Courtenay had already died. Kathy is very much alive.

²<https://archive.org/web/>

³<https://aifs.gov.au/research/facts-and-figures/divorces-australia> Accessed 19 July 2023.

Acknowledgements

I am very grateful to the people who've contributed to this book: Kathina Ali, Gabriele Bammer, Michelle Banfield, Anthony Bennett, Kylie Bennett, Pam Boyer, Margaret Condonis, Lorraine Crocos, John Cunningham, Martin Eisemann, Prue Gleeson, Jack & Erika Griffiths-Hawking, Fiona Hurley, Mike Kyrios, Anne Mathew, Pat McGorry, Andrew Mackinnon, Michael Moore, Fiona Nelms, Dawn O'Neil, Ingrid Ozols, Julia Reynolds, Sebastian Rosenberg, and Georgia Tayler.

I'm sure that there are many others who would like to have contributed positive recollections about Kathy, and I apologise to them. To those I didn't contact, my only defence is that I wanted to bring the project to a timely close and to keep the weight of the printed book under one kilogram.

Contents

1	I'm not a superstar!!! (Oh yes you are!)	8
2	Childhood	15
2.1	The house at Creighton	20
2.2	Challenges for a domestic goddess	22
2.3	Keeping cool	24
2.4	Play	24
2.5	Farm work	25
2.6	School	26
2.7	Teachers	30
2.8	Extra-curricular activities	31
2.9	Parental Illness	34
2.10	Friends	35
2.11	Dogs	37
3	Pat Griffiths, née Threlfall, Kathy's mother	40
3.1	Manning the radios	47
3.2	Gardening	48
3.3	Arts and crafts	49
3.4	Final illness	51
3.5	Pat's legacy to Kathy	51
3.6	Kathy's ancestors on her mother's side	52
3.6.1	Alice Threlfall, née Burke, Kathy's maternal grandmother	52
3.6.2	Jack Threlfall, Kathy's maternal grandfather	55
3.6.3	George Threlfall, Jack's father	56
3.7	Tracing maternal ancestors	57
4	Harold Griffiths, Kathy's Father	58
4.1	WWII military service	61
4.2	Agitating for better roads.	62
4.3	Creighton: A strategic target for enemy bombing?	63
4.4	Roles in emergency management and response	64
4.5	Years in Canberra	68
4.6	Final illness	70
4.7	Kathy's ancestors on her father's side	70
4.7.1	Les Griffiths, Kathy's paternal grandfather	70
4.7.2	Griffiths family in Gippsland	73
4.7.3	Ruth Griffiths née Hamblin, Kathy's paternal grandmother	73
4.7.4	Arthur Hamblin, Ruth's father	76

4.7.5	Joseph Hamblin, Ruth's grandfather	78
5	University studies	82
5.1	13 MacDonnell St, Yarralumla	84
5.2	24 Hovea St, O'Connor	86
6	Post-graduate work and study	88
6.1	54 Gardiner St, Downer	90
6.2	Chronic Fatigue Syndrome: Origins	91
6.3	PhD	91
7	Neuropsychology, pregnancy, and CFS	94
7.1	Returning to ANU	94
7.2	Pregnancy and CFS	96
7.3	Moving to Turner, starting private practice	97
7.4	A book on head injury	99
8	Jack	100
8.1	An epic journey to central Australia	100
8.2	A gentle giant	101
8.3	Primary education	102
8.4	Asian influences	104
8.5	Thursday nights in Civic	105
8.6	Sport	106
8.7	Veganism	107
8.8	Medical issues affecting high school	107
8.9	Employment	108
8.10	Erika	108
8.11	What can we say about Jack?	110
9	Craft, Music, and Travel	111
9.1	Travel	118
9.1.1	Tasmania, 1974	118
9.1.2	A circular tour of northern and western Australia	118
9.1.3	'Holidays' in Europe	121
9.1.4	Work travel	122
10	CMHR	124
10.1	Australian Foundation for Mental Health Research	124
10.2	Later fund raising	127
10.3	Consumer Research Unit (CRU)	129
10.4	Contribution to aviation safety	131
10.5	Role of IT in mental health research	131
10.6	DHAC funding of online mental health interventions	131
10.7	Ethics	132
10.8	Presentations	132
10.9	Directorship	134
10.10	Commercialisation of e-hub online interventions	136
10.11	National Institute for Mental Health Research	137
10.12	Public policy	137

10.13 Rural and remote mental health	140
10.14 International collaborations	141
10.15 PhD students	144
10.16 Remote working at Creighton	145
10.17 An overall perspective of Kathy's time at CMHR	145
11 Per ardua ad astra	147
12 Downfall of CMHR e-Mental Health	150
12.1 Consequences of the departure of Helen Christensen	150
12.2 Funding rule change	150
12.3 Detrimental re-organisation	151
12.4 Forced teaching of undergraduates	151
12.5 A sad end	154
13 Walking and Other Adventures	155
13.1 Walking holidays	155
13.1.1 2018: Tongariro Crossing	155
13.1.2 2018: South Cornwall Coast Path	159
13.1.3 2019: West Highland Way	163
13.1.4 2022: Coast to Coast Walk	168
13.2 Other holiday adventures	173
13.2.1 2015: Scotland, Iceland, Spain, France, England	173
13.2.2 2018: Isle of Arran	175
13.2.3 2018: Faroe Islands	177
13.2.4 2018: Iceland and Greenland	179
13.2.5 2018: Shetland	185
13.2.6 Other island adventures	189
13.2.7 2019: Churchill, Manitoba	189
14 What can we say about Kathy?	191
Appendices	196
Appendix A: Timeline for Kathy	197
Appendix B: Pat's memories of Creighton State School	198
Appendix C: Harold's Service to the Euroa/Longwood Community.	203
14.0.1 Fires	203
14.0.2 Hospital	203
14.0.3 Hostel	203
14.0.4 Currie Homes	203
14.0.5 Deputy Shire Engineer	203
14.0.6 Councillor, Shire of Euroa 1965–1975	204
14.0.7 Civil Defence / State Emergency Service	204
14.0.8 Senior Citizens	205
14.0.9 Kindergarten & Infant Welfare Centre	205
14.0.10 Swimming Pool	205
14.0.11 Euroa High School	205
14.0.12 Other	205
Appendix D: Kathy's talk at her father's memorial.	206

Chapter 1

I'm not a superstar!!! (Oh yes you are!)

University promotion committees and research funding organisations¹ evaluate researchers on multiple dimensions. They strongly reward researchers who do consequential research, obtain funding to pursue it, publish it in prestigious venues, and translate it into real benefit for society and country, while training the researchers of tomorrow, and collaborating with organisations outside their own. Commercialisation of research is also valued. On these criteria, Kathy Griffiths is a superstar.

According to Google Scholar², Kathleen (Kathy) Griffiths has an h-index of 88. Other researchers will tell you that this is very remarkable indeed, an index of 88 being achieved by very very few academics. For those readers unfamiliar with the measures used to rate academic researchers, an h-index of 88 means that 88 of her scientific publications have each been cited by at least 88 other such publications. According to Jorge Hirsch, the inventor of the h-index, “a person with 20 years of research experience with an h-index of 20 is good, 40 is great, and 60 is remarkable.”³

All but two of her heavily cited publications were published during her 15 years working at ANU's Centre for Mental Health Research (CMHR) where she became employed in 2001. In the two decades before that her work output was severely limited by chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS) following a horrible combination of glandular fever and toxoplasmosis. Furthermore, throughout her career she has battled bouts of severe depression. Oh, and for many years she wasn't working in an academic role.

In her time at CMHR, Kathy achieved several other things which deserve even more celebration than her publication record. Alone or with colleagues, she was successful in winning more than twenty million dollars in grants, leading to employment for talented researchers and the development of valuable services for consumers. Money came from the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), the Australian Research Council (ARC), from DHAC,⁴ from the ACT Government, and from smaller organisations like Rotary. At one stage a majority of staff at CMHR were funded by grants on which Kathy was a Chief Investigator (CI).

Kathy also successfully supervised dozens of PhD students – up to 15 at a time! Despite her own work overload, she put time and effort into their success and in many cases supported them through personal difficulties and crises. Former students pay fulsome tribute to her assistance and abilities and our garden has benefited from presents offered in gratitude.

Kathy possesses remarkable skills as an editor, able to rapidly spot organisational problems in papers and theses while unerringly correcting grammar and spelling, and improving style. Her students and collaborators sometimes ruefully confessed that their efforts had been ‘Griffithsed’. Kathy occasionally read drafts of my own academic papers and subjected them to the full treatment. The first time I was Griffithsed I felt shame and annoyance that someone with no expertise in my field could, within a couple of minutes, identify defective organisation and faulty logic. But, like other victims/beneficiaries of Kathy's editing I learned valuable lessons and improved my work.

¹E.g. National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), and the Australian Research Council (ARC).

²<https://scholar.google.com.au/citations?user=rQo6snUAAAAJ&hl=en> Accessed 19 July 2023.

³quoted at <https://paperpile.com/g/what-is-a-good-h-index/> Accessed 19 July 2023.

⁴Department of Health and Aged Care, formerly known as the Department of Health, formerly known as the Department of Health and Ageing, formerly known as the Department of Health.

Kylie Bennett's memory of Kathy's 'red-penning'

Rather than 'Griffithsing' Kylie remembers it as 'red-penning', and says that any document given to Kathy came back covered in red ink, and was inevitably improved. Kylie saw Kathy's willingness to invest her scarce time into improving drafts as a sure sign that she cared for their authors.

In her relatively brief employment at CMHR, Kathy also pioneered consumer-research into mental illness. This was a radical idea and resisted by many. However it is now accepted practice. She was successful in gaining funding to employ a consumer-researcher – i.e a qualified researcher who had been diagnosed and treated for a mental health condition. That was a national first. She also established a communication network and resource for consumer research called BrolgaNet.

Early on, Kathy recognised that there were no proper scale for measuring stigma associated with depression. How could you assess the level of such stigma in the community or determine whether an intervention had reduced it, if there was no way to measure it? She set about devising and validating scales for depression and different types of anxiety stigma, as well as for measuring community knowledge about depression and anxiety. Six years after retirement she still receives a steady flow of requests to use her scales, often involving translation into another language/culture. Handling these requests frequently involves brokering collaborations between groups unaware that each other were conducting similar research. E.g. "I'm happy to grant permission to use my scale but you should know that Group X at Institution Y in your country has already translated the scale, and may be willing to share the translation."

In addition, Kathy, with her rural background, had a passionate interest in improving mental health in rural and remote areas. One result was the establishment of a mental health communication network (MulgaNet) by ANU and the NSW Centre for Rural and Remote Mental Health.

ANU researcher Kylie Brittliffe says many country people suffer from mental health problems and professionals find it difficult to access the latest information on issues such as depression or suicide. She hopes the online service will eliminate that problem and encourage medical staff to stay in country areas.⁵

Unfortunately, Mulganet and Brolganet have long ceased operation due to lack of funding.

Kathy was promoted to Professor in 2009 and, after Helen Christensen left ANU in late 2011,⁶ Kathy was appointed CMHR Director and remained in that position until her retirement in September 2016. She was also heavily involved in fund-raising to support mental health research.

All of the above is remarkable, but the greatest impact of Kathy's time at ANU was the creation, with colleagues, of ground-breaking mental health resources delivered via the web. These resources included *BluePages*, *MoodGYM*, *e-couch*, *Mental Health Guru*, and *Blue Board*. They improved the lives of many many people around the globe. As we will see later, *MoodGYM* was spectacularly successful.

After Kathy's retirement from ANU in 2016, operation of *MoodGYM*, *Mental Health Guru*, and *e-couch* was transferred to an ANU spinoff company called e-hub Health, founded by wife and husband team Kylie and Anthony Bennett. Kylie and Anthony were long time CMHR employees and Kylie completed a PhD under Kathy's supervision. At the time of writing⁷, e-hub Health programs had almost 1.4 million registered users. The DHAC contract remains with ANU, who sub-contract the service provision to e-hub Health. Kathy, as an ANU emeritus professor, manages ANU's side of the contract. Here's a list of the main online interventions in which Kathy played a critical role:

BluePages: In 2001 CMHR published a book called *Help for Depression: What Works and What Doesn't* which listed every alleged treatment for depression, including unlikely but commonly accessed things such as alcohol and chocolate. CMHR systematically reviewed the medical literature on

⁵<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2005-12-17/internet-service-boosts-access-to-mental-health/763312> Accessed 19 July 2023

⁶To my amazement, ANU seemed to make no effort to retain her.

⁷28 May 2022

each such 'treatment' and rated it according to the strength of the evidence for a positive effect. Kathy soon took responsibility for publishing the same information and ratings via a web site called `bluepages.anu.edu.au`. BluePages also provided the ability to search not only site content, but either a set of external high-quality depression resources, or a very large ensemble of quality web sites relating to depression. (At the time, requests for depression information on general web search engines sometimes returned recommendations for harmful "treatments" and sometimes provided details of how to suicide.)

MoodGYM: Kathy and Helen Christensen together created a hugely influential website which delivered online interventions aimed at improving the mental health status of young people suffering from depression. The pathway to funding of the intervention was not without its obstacles. Kathy wrote the original grant application for NHMRC funding of the project but, in the absence of a proof of concept, it was not forthcoming.

A prototype was created to demonstrate potential and was sufficient to persuade Michael Moore (ACT Minister for Health and Communities) to fund the development of the first production version. That in turn led to funding of the research as part of CMHR's NHMRC Program Grant.

Helen wrote the initial script, Kathy having sketched out the modules which would be required. Kathy commissioned a talented graphic artist to create visual forms for the characters in the MoodGYM prototype. Once they secured funding Helen and Kathy commissioned a website company to implement MoodGYM. At this point in the development the application was built on an e-commerce shopping cart platform and the developers were mainly fellow students of the original graphic artist. Later, all development work was moved inhouse.

Once completed the key question was whether MoodGYM would be effective. In their first gold standard randomised controlled trial of MoodGYM, Helen and Kathy sent out 27,000 questionnaires to people randomly selected from the community. From these they recruited 525 members of the public with depressive symptoms to participate in a trial of MoodGYM. They found that MoodGYM worked. Those who received MoodGYM showed a significantly greater improvement in mood than those who were allocated to a control group. Many further studies confirmed the effectiveness of MoodGYM in a range of settings and age groups.

This validation was a vitally significant result since no-one had previously demonstrated that online mental health interventions delivered benefit.

The ANU infrastructure supported the implementation of trials of MoodGYM and e-Couch by researchers from ANU, elsewhere in Australia and overseas. For example it was used to undertake a trial of MoodGYM among over 3000 visitors to the UK's NHS Choices online portal and a number of trials of MoodGYM were undertaken by researchers from the Arctic University of Tromsø in the far north of Norway. The ability to recruit, randomise, collect data, and implement the intervention *automatically*, was a major benefit.

Hundreds of thousands of people from more than 190 countries interacted with, and benefited from MoodGYM. MoodGYM was a treatment recommended by the NHS in the UK, and it has been translated into several languages including Dutch, German, Norwegian, Spanish and Chinese. After initial funding from the ACT Government, and subsequent NHMRC grants, its operation in Australia has been continuously funded since 2007 by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care (DHAC).

Kathy was quick to realise that MoodGYM's underlying IT system is critical to its success. MoodGYM had to work reliably and to be able to support large numbers of concurrent users, while providing a high quality platform for research. I've already written about the evolving implementation of MoodGYM in my earlier book, *The History of ANU Computing*, starting at Page 263. It's freely available online at <https://openresearch-repository.anu.edu.au/handle/1885/237793>. Anthony Bennett and David Berriman played critical roles.

The NHMRC clearly regards MoodGYM and its associated research as a highly successful outcome of its research funding. With cooperation from Kathy and ANU, in 2022 it published

MoodGYM: Case Study which is available for download at <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/resources/impact-case-studies/moodgym-case-study>.⁸

e-couch aims at a broader demographic than MoodGYM and provides help on a broader range of topics: Depression, Anxiety & Worry, Social Anxiety, Divorce & Separation and Loss & Bereavement. Kathy, Georgia Tayler, and Helen Christensen wrote the content. The benefit of its programs has been established by randomised control trials (RCTs) for three of the topics.

Mental Health Guru is specifically designed to improve mental health in workplaces. Kathy led the team who researched and developed this tool and demonstrated its effectiveness in a randomised controlled trial.

Kathy: Unlike school children who are easily accessible through schools, reaching adults with public awareness programs is a challenge. It seemed to me that workplaces provided a perfect environment in which to embed these programs and that delivering them online provided a scalable means for doing so. MHGuru could also seamlessly link employees to effective online treatment and to sources of face-to-face help. It would have the potential to both improve employee wellbeing and increase work productivity, the latter providing employers with a motivation to adopt the program. My vision was that MHGuru could be implemented as a workplace induction program so that every new employee would be exposed to the training.

Blue Board was an online bulletin board set up by Kathy as a source of mutual support for people suffering depression, and their carers. It provided valuable help to participants but was prone to misuse by trouble-makers. It was ably moderated by CMHR staff and later contractors with a consumer background who were supervised by a CMHR clinical psychologist. Kathy was listed on the web site as the ANU person responsible for the service. Unfortunately, this led to her receiving threats which were judged by the police to be serious and credible. She had to take measures at home and work for her own protection.



Photo: Kathy

⁸ Accessed 16 Jan 2023.

Michael Moore AM PhD, former ACT Minister for Health and Community Care, outlines the origins of MoodGYM.

"We have this idea for an internet enabled self-diagnosis tool for people with depression." This was an argument put by Kathy Griffiths and Helen Christensen to me in 1998. Our conversation occurred in the time before Google.

Kathy and Helen had come into my office as Health Minister for the ACT with this terrific idea for an interactive computer engagement at a time when such programs were in a nascent phase – at least in my experience.

To put this in context. Kathy and Helen were at the Australian National University and I had been Minister for Health and Community Care for a few months. The briefing for me as a new minister over those months was consistently along the lines of the Department has carefully considered budgets, money cannot be given away at a whim. Favoured projects will need to go through a budget process and this can take the best part of a year.

Unbeknown to Kathy and Helen or any of the Department officers, I was quite close to a young person who used early versions of internet enabled computer games as a way of coping with bullying and depression. I was very interested in the program they were describing that would allow self-diagnosis and guide how to find help for depression over the internet.

I asked how much they were looking for and they told me. I asked if that would cover all of the costs. They indicated they were asking half from the ACT and would approach the Commonwealth for the other half.

To the horror of the Departmental liaison officer who was at the meeting, I said that they need not worry. The ACT would cover all of the costs of this innovative program. The Departmental officer intervened three times to ask if we might take it on notice, delay for a week, get an answer quickly. I remained firm and Kathy and Helen left very happy that their program would be funded.

This would be one of the only times in the three and a half years that I was minister that I agreed, on the spot, to provide funding. The head of the Department came to my office within half an hour asking where I thought I would get the money that was not budgeted. "As of this moment", I said, "there will be no air travel by anyone in the Department until such time as the equivalent has been raised. This will then pay for the programs. Unless you can find an alternative." It was a very short while before I heard that the Department had found a way to make the money available.

I am still very proud of the small part that I played in the launch of Moodgym that has been so important to so many people locally, nationally and internationally.

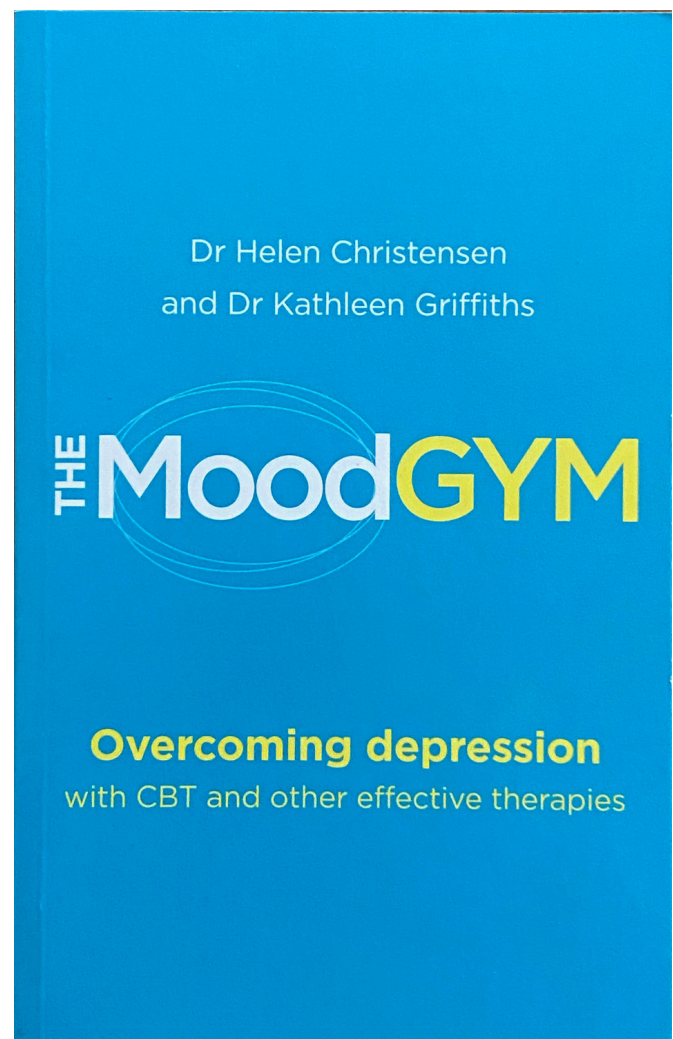
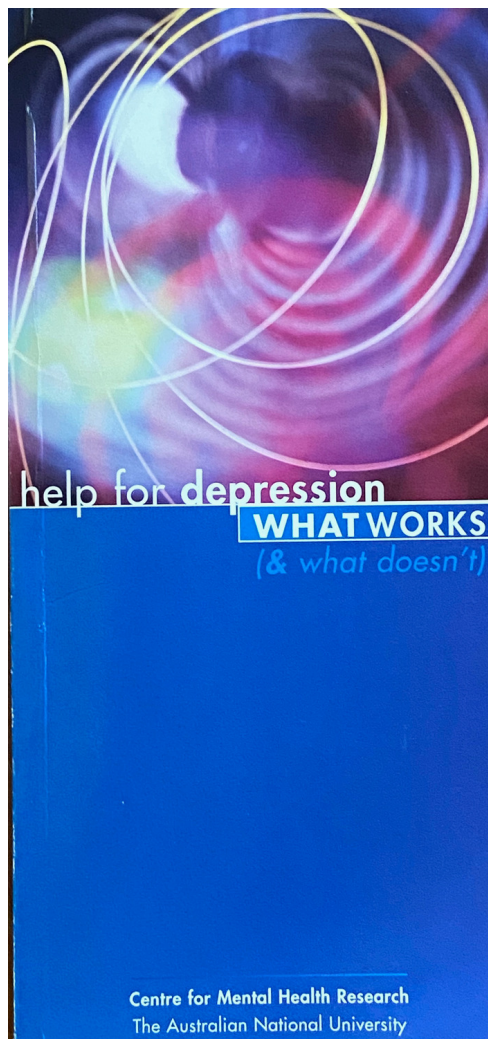
The engagement with Kathy and Helen was just the beginning of an important relationship that helped so much for me to understand the complexity of issues around mental health and the importance of research in this area. I count myself very lucky to have known and worked with Kathy (and Helen) since that time.

CMHR (originally known as the Social Psychiatry Research Unit, SPRU) was founded in 1974 by Scott Henderson, wholly funded by the NHMRC. Scott chose ANU to host it and, for most of its first 40 years, it was entirely funded by 'soft money', rather than from the ANU budget. This is extremely unusual, and signals an extraordinary level of success by CMHR directors and their staff.

From my outsider's perspective, the way CMHR operated in the decade up until 2015 was the epitome of success for a research group. They were doing impactful research, publishing prolifically, and being heavily cited. They were highly regarded in the international research community and participated in many collaborations with international partners. They were graduating large numbers of PhD students. They were attracting millions in external research funding. Even better, they were delivering massive benefit to Australia through e-mental health resources, public seminars, the *Mental Health First Aid* program, and advice to mental health bodies.

Online resources such as MoodGYM not only provided community services but, like a particle accelerator in physics, provided the tools for conducting research at an unprecedented scale. The e-mental-health tools were fully instrumented and provided the framework for efficiently running large numbers of high-quality randomised controlled trials. This ANU infrastructure supported experimentation by researchers both from ANU and from several external institutions.

It is widely accepted that there is typically a lag of about 17 years between health research and its application in practice.⁹ From very early on, Kathy was a staunch believer that combining mental health research with service delivery could dramatically reduce this lag. With colleagues, she proved it. Using the research infrastructure built into CMHR's online services, it was possible to observe which components of an intervention were working well and to quickly remove or modify those which weren't.



Left: Kathy was a co-author of this 2001 book published by CMHR. Right: Helen and Kathy's 2011 book on MoodGYM, published by Random House.

As we've seen, CMHR was able to gain funding for service delivery in the form of online interventions. That supported a large amount of important research which was not considered fundable by traditional research funding agencies, and much of which could not have been undertaken without interactions with service users.

In 2014, a triumphant event was held to celebrate CMHR's 40th anniversary. Scott Henderson attended and eminent mental health researchers from around the globe sent congratulatory videos or dialled in to the celebrations.¹⁰

⁹<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3241518/>

¹⁰When Kathy and Scott later travelled to the ABC studios for an interview, Kathy presented the interviewer with a slice

Who would have imagined that, within a year, changes in ANU structure and policy would bring the CMHR e-mental health research engine to a grinding halt. That story will be told in Chapter 12.

In the meantime, let's start back at the beginning, with Kathy's childhood.

of the 40th anniversary cake. The cake had been beautifully decorated with the NIMHR image. See Page 137 for a photo of the original painting.

Chapter 2

Childhood

Kathleen Margaret Griffiths, 1953–, b.Kew, Vic.

Kathy's parents were Patricia (Pat) Griffiths née Threlfall and Harold Griffiths, and she spent her childhood on their sheep farm at Creighton, about ten kilometres from Euroa, Victoria. Pat and Harold were married on Guy Fawkes Day in 1948 and they lived in the Melbourne suburb of Blackburn until 1953. Harold had been suffering severe headaches while working in a senior engineering position in the Public Works Department, and he and Pat decided to reduce stress by entering a farming partnership with Pat's parents. Pat returned to Melbourne for Kathy's birth. It's possible that Harold's headaches were the first symptom of a brain tumour removed some years later.



Kathy's parents, Pat and Harold. Photographer unknown.

Creighton is both the name of a small district¹ and the name of the Griffiths property. Harold and Pat's property eventually comprised two non-adjoining blocks separated by the railway line and a thin wedge of land belonging to Pat's parents. Moving sheep from one block to the other was a nerve-wracking process.

Kathy: The sheep had to be driven down the road, over the railway line and down an old road next to the line. Not only was it essential to avoid crossing the line when a train was passing but there was nothing but us to stop the sheep from heading up or down the tracks. Quite a challenge, given the unpredictable behaviour of sheep. There was significant risk of sheep being killed and danger to vehicles and trains.

Following Harold's practice I'm not going to tell you big the farm was. If you asked him how much land they had, he'd respond with, "How much money do you have in the bank?"

The southern block of the farm borders both the railway and the Hume Freeway and is now owned by Kathy's brother John. The northern block contains the house and shearing shed. It's now owned by Kathy and mostly leased out.



Kathy and brother John driving the 1956 McCormick International B-250 tractor. We still have it and it's still in use. Photographer unknown.

¹Victoria Place-Names and their Origin, Saxton and Buckie, 1907, https://dro.deakin.edu.au/articles/book/Victoria_place-names_and_their_origin/21127801/1 Accessed 19 July 2023.



Creighton station: These photos supplied by Vicky Doody (née Worland) who obtained them from Des Halsall who was the son of the station master Ray Halsall. There was also a siding where superphosphate was offloaded, giving rise to the name of Creightons Siding Road. In her childhood Kathy used to ride her bike up to the station to collect the mail but nothing now remains of platform, siding, or buildings.



Left: Hospital birth tag. Right: Can the Inter ute really be this big? Photo: Harold.



Kathy and John with cousins Greg and Dennis in a horse and buggy, already old at the time of the photo. At Ellalea. Photo: Harold.



Much better to have a creek than a swimming pool! Photos: Harold.



The c. 1870 part of the old house at Creighton with a tree planted for us by neighbour Chris Halsall. Photo taken in 2022.

2.1 The house at Creighton

Kathy grew up in the same weatherboard farmhouse as had her mother. The oldest part of the house was built in c. 1870 with four small rooms plus separate kitchen and wet areas.² The house was extended in c. 1910 to include extra rooms: what became Kathy's bedroom, an entertaining room, a bathroom, and a kitchen/living room. A further wet-area extension was necessitated in the 1960s, when Kathy's parents came home to find that John had demolished the old wash house!

Kathy: The first bathroom I used was accessed via an external verandah – a cold trek at night in winter and an invigorating bath due to part of the bathroom wall being open to the air! I think in the early days of my childhood, baths were typically a weekly affair taken on Sunday night to enable a clean start to the school week."

At the end of the 1960s a 'modern' extension with a concrete slab floor provided a formal dining/living area and a bedroom with a north-facing picture window. By this time, the stumps under much of the older parts of the house had been undermined by rabbits, and the walls of the original four rooms had been largely eaten out by termites. Rats, mice, possums and even snakes roamed the ceilings and wall cavities. By 1994, mice controlled the kitchen, eating out the stuffing of the comfortable chairs and nesting in the pantry.

Harold worked to repair much of the old part of the house, jacking up and re-stumping the floor which had subsided. He also straightened out the rafters and ceiling joints, one screw turn at a time over months to avoid breakage. I helped out with re-flooring, replacing termite-eaten framing, re-cladding walls and floors and replacing windows. Three-metre-long hardwood wall studs were eaten by the termites to paper thin shells which could be lifted as easily as a handful of tissues.

At some point long ago, the termites were treated with slow-degrading dieldrin which has long been banned in Australia and has been linked to both an increased risk of breast cancer and higher rates of mortality from breast cancer.³ Interesting that both Pat and I were treated for that condition.

Snakes regularly visited the house. Kathy's former bedroom has a bullet hole where Grandad Jack leaned in through the window and shot one. A brown snake was killed in the shower cubicle by a visitor, and Kathy's father once covered the floor with a dusting of flour to locate a snake which appeared in the kitchen and then disappeared. When Grandad Jack pulled a bucket of water out of the well at Ellalea and found a snake in the bucket, he hooked the reptile on a stick and demanded that nine-year-old John "shoot the bugger" with a 12-gauge shotgun.

Kathy says snakes even appeared in the classroom

I remember entering the classroom and baulking when I saw a snake sitting in the teacher's chair. One of the boys pushed me forward, hushing me. The snake – fortunately dead – produced the desired shriek from the teacher as she entered the room.

All around the house flyscreen doors were covered over with masonite to a height sufficient to stop the entry of snakes when the screen itself was (inevitably) breached by dogs, children or accidents. By around 1995, I reduced the property's attractiveness to snakes by blocking up sufficient holes to keep the rodents out of the rooms.

Absolutely everything in the Creighton house was jury rigged. Doors were secured with nails instead of latches, and holes were plugged with rags or wads of steel wool (which eventually rotted or rusted). In the post-1960s wet areas the walls around the toilet only came up to just above head height. The toilet door was marked with a sign from a hospital which said ADMITTING OFFICE. A barely successful attempt had been made to control the obvious potential for bad smells by plugging a fan into the light fitting which lit the laundry, toilet and entry passage. Much much later I found that the sewer pipe connecting the toilet to the septic tank ran slightly uphill! That confirmed Harold's long held criticism that the old house had been built in a hollow.

²In that era kitchen fires were common and it was considered easier to replace a kitchen than a whole house.

³<https://www.bcpp.org/resource/dieldrin-and-aldrin/> Accessed 19 July 2023.

The shower head was a large circular waterfall type and it was fed from a header tank. The water poured gently over you. It delivered the most luxurious shower I've ever experienced. That was just as well, as the rest of the shower arrangements were well below modern standards. The shower base was of rough concrete with a small outlet that very frequently blocked. A rubber strip poked down it to prevent entry by snakes could sometimes be jiggled mid-shower to free a blockage. Where they were lined at all, the walls were lined with fibro cement. A nylon shower curtain hung up on nails kept the water mostly within the shower itself. Clothes and towels had to be hung up on nails. All this was irrelevant to Kathy who much preferred to have a bath, except when mosquito wrigglers turned up in the water.

Water for the house came from two wells, each with an electric pump in the shearing shed, and from a windmill in a paddock a kilometre and a half away. Harold was a pump expert and was also very proud of the fact that he'd managed to lay the pipe from the windmill to the house in a single day using a rabbit ripper on the back of his tractor. Water quality deteriorated sometimes when snakes, goannas or other animals found their way into the wells.

During Kathy's early childhood, the toilet was of the old 'dunny-can' variety and located in the engine-shed outside. Using it involved something of a trek from the main house. Kathy doesn't remember very clearly, but in that era toilet paper rolls were generally not used. Instead, people wiped their bottoms with torn up strips of newspaper. Harold was the nightsoil man – he had the job of emptying the dunny cans. When the household graduated to an indoor toilet and septic system, Harold wasn't best pleased that for a while Kathy continued to use the old toilet. She apparently preferred the familiar old wooden seat located in the privacy of an outhouse to its newer, less privately situated, plastic replacement.



I'm not lying about the shower, but the photo doesn't convey how luxurious showering actually was.

The engine-shed also housed a large 32 volt alternator, powered by a diesel engine. It must have seemed a major step forward when mains power from the State Electricity Commission (SEC) arrived, although it too had its limitations.

Sticking to the party line

Kathy tells me that originally the telephone service operated on the party line system. An incoming call would cause the phones to ring in each of the several farmhouses on the party line. Distinct ring patterns allowed people to tell whether the call was for them but nothing stopped them from listening to other people's. Creighton's number was Euroa 128K with the 'K' represented in Morse as dash dot dash. Creighton and Pat's parents at *Ellalea* used a secret code when they wanted to share the price they'd obtained for their wool.

At the time of writing the old house still stands, and contains a lot of family history, but restoration has been in abeyance for a couple of decades.



A copper like the one used by Pat. We found this one at the Kyneton Museum.

2.2 Challenges for a domestic goddess

Like everyone else, Pat used a copper for washing clothes and bedding. For younger readers, a copper was a cauldron made of thin copper inside a circular cast iron shell. A wood fire was lit in the fire box under the copper proper. The copper was filled with water and heated to boiling. The laundry to be washed was then added to the water along with flaked or grated plain soap (e.g. Velvet) while agitating with a wooden stick. The stick was also used to transfer washed clothes into

a big concrete laundry tub for rinsing, probably with a bag of Reckitt's Blue to whiten it. Finally, the rinsed clothes would be run through a clothes wringer before hanging on the line. Very hard work!

As a child Kathy wasn't a fan of the copper, having been accidentally scalded all over her chest by its boiling water. At least on that occasion she was taken to the doctor who covered her entire front with sticking plaster. On two other occasions when she was quite seriously injured, no recourse was had to official medical services. First, she was badly cut by the door of the kitchen stove, and later a nervous assistant at Mrs Rose's cafe poured a pot of boiling tea over her scalp.

In the kitchen, a cast-iron wood stove was the only source of heat for comfort, cooking, and water heating.⁴ In cold weather, the kitchen stove was the centre of the household. When Harold came in cold from work outdoors he would open the door of the fire box, plonk himself in a canvas director's chair in front of it with a cup of tea and read *Popular Mechanics*, dreaming of mechanical inventions, and cursing politicians who weren't doing enough for 'progress'. He planted himself in the very middle of the limited space Pat had for cooking.

Pat was a great cook but, having subsequently cooked in that kitchen, I don't know how she managed! I found myself moving furniture to create much more bench space and erecting barricades to discourage anyone from entering the work area.

Harold rarely cooked but made porridge for breakfast in the winter and made toast by holding slices of bread to the open door of the stove with a fork. He surprised us once by cooking delicious steaks on the hot plates of the stove. He kept a mirror on the back of the stove which he would use before lighting the fire to check that the flue wasn't blocked by birds nests or foolish possums.

In hot weather, the stove was a pain. You needed to have a fire for hot water and cooking but the room was already very hot. A cooler cooking alternative was an electric frypan, but the mains electricity supply was so poor that, at mealtimes when others were using power, the frypan couldn't raise a sizzle. To adapt a Ronnie Corbett joke, if we'd been racing greyhounds the electric hare would have come dead last.

Kathy remembers a green kerosene-powered refrigerator in the kitchen and another cooling device in the wash house, made of wood. Perhaps it was an ice chest relying on ice blocks from the refrigerator.

A device which relied on evaporation for cooling was the canvas water bag. You filled it with water and inserted the bottle of liquid you wanted to cool. Water would seep through the canvas and evaporate with consequent lowering of temperature. People would hang them on the front of their vehicle to increase evaporation when the vehicle moved. Harold carried one on the tractor when he went out in the paddocks.

When the family went over to the ford on Creightons Creek for a picnic in summer, they would take a tin of tomato juice and cool it in the flowing water, before Kathy and John shared the contents.

Despite the kitchen handicaps, Pat was responsible for providing morning tea, lunch, and afternoon tea for shearers for a whole week each August. Pat's mother Alice would come over from the adjacent property (*Ellalea*) to help out and Pat would return the favour the following week. Properties were rated by shearing teams on the quality of the food provided, and at Creighton they were very happy, treated to roast lamb with all the trimmings for lunch and to a massive spread of biscuits, cakes and slices at the morning and afternoon breaks. John and Kathy benefited from the leftovers.

Although Creighton and Ellalea were adjacent properties, there was a considerable distance between the houses, and the track to Ellalea crossed a dangerously rickety bridge. Visits between the houses were a major adventure when the creek was up. So challenging was the old bridge before it was replaced that, on their regular trips to Ellalea, Kathy's mother usually drove the much longer way round by side roads and the highway.

Finances on the farm were very tight. The early 1950s image of wealthy graziers mustering sheep in their Rolls Royces never applied in Creighton. Farm income fluctuated significantly due to fluctuations in both climate and the wool price – much easier to be a wage earner. Kathy remembers that an entire year's income was needed to cover the cost of her father's brain operation.

Kathy: I also remember my mother pointing out that a packet of Weetbix cost as much as they

⁴Kathy received injuries from both the stove and the copper but fortunately not the wringer.

earned for a whole merino sheep.

Pat spent extremely little on cutlery, crockery, kitchen appliances or any form of luxury. At the time she died in 1994, we were still using bone-handled carbon steel knives from a shooting prize my grandfather won. All through Kathy's childhood they were kept in their own beautiful felt-lined wooden box and brought out only for Sunday lunches or special occasions, with the handles forbidden to be immersed in water. Eventually the handles were ruined and they became part of the daily utensils. The aluminium saucepans were deeply pock-marked from decades of use and the crockery was mismatched and chipped.

As for kitchen renovations and improvements during my 50 year connection to the place:

- Harold tiled the kitchen floor.
- Harold and Pat bought a laminex extension table at a clearance sale. Harold wasn't very pleased when the spring-supported extension leaf collapsed one day.
- They bought a gas stove to avoid the heat of the wood stove in summer. It worked well for decades, but during Pat's final illness a leaking internal gas pipe caused a massive explosion which risked burning down the house. Harold managed to get Pat out of the house and to extinguish the flames.⁵

2.3 Keeping cool

The old house was very hot in summer. Until Harold and Kathy installed fibreglass batts above the ceiling it was sometimes unbearable. Kathy says that the best remedy was to lie on the floor and hang a wet towel between you and the fan. (There was only one fan.)

After the house dam was first excavated, Kathy used to swim there. This practice continued until leeches found their way into the water. Since Kathy is phobic about leeches, worms, and snakes, swimming was instantly and permanently discontinued.

At some point, Harold created a large diameter, above ground, shallow swimming pool out of corrugated iron and concrete with *bondcrete* used to seal it. It was also no doubt intended to provide a fire-fighting reserve. Unfortunately it was very easy to graze or cut yourself while paddling and we were never able to stop it leaking.

Kathy finds it difficult to reconcile the modern expectations of air-conditioning, internet, video streaming, smart phones, multiple ensuites and giant houses on tiny blocks with the frequent claim that younger generations are doing it tougher than their forebears.

2.4 Play

Kathy's childhood was quite isolated and she wasn't close to her much older brother. She became adept at entertaining herself.

Outdoors, she used to play hopscotch against herself, and when older she would hit tennis balls against the corrugated wall of the shearing shed. She liked wandering outdoors, collecting the tasty sap from wattles or just enjoying the environment of the creek banks, composing poetic descriptions in her mind.

Indoors, she had no time for dolls except as students in the pretend classroom in which she reigned as teacher. She envied some of the presents given to John – building blocks and especially Meccano. She sometimes played pick-up-sticks and Chinese checkers against herself. Many other indoor activities are listed in Section 2.8. She had pen-friends in Papua New Guinea, England and Singapore.

⁵Pat didn't have it easy. One day, after her terminal diagnosis, she walked out to the vegetable patch. On retreating at the sight of a snake, she encountered another snake between her and the house.

She liked creative writing and was a voracious reader. When she was younger Pat generally chose the books she read, and obtained them from the local library. Australian fiction was heavily represented, including books by Ivan Southall (e.g. *Hill's End* and *Ash Road*). Children's history books were also on the list, including stories about William of Orange and Mary, and the Brontë sisters. By the time Pat banned the reading of Enid Blyton's books, Kathy had already read through all the *Secret Seven* and *Famous Five* series. She was an enthusiastic reader of *Look and Learn* magazine and annual.⁶

At school, Kathy was an enthusiastic participant in the colour coded reading scheme designed to increase literacy in students. In the modern versions you start by reading books in the pink band. Once you have read a quota from that band you move on to books in the red band, and so on until you get to purple and beyond. Kathy was happiest at primary school in the free reading period when pupils were permitted to read books they chose themselves.

Kathy: beginning to question what she read.

As a fifth grader I remember reading in a book that a particular gun could be fired so rapidly that no gun in future could surpass its speed. I could not accept this! There was no way, I reasoned, that the author could know this and in fact I thought it likely that future developments would prove the statement incorrect.

When she visited her grandmother Ruth at Illawarra Rd Hawthorn, she was delighted to find a stash of girls annuals which had belonged to her aunt Lorna. She loved reading about the high jinks of the girls at private schools in England in the era before WWII. Among Lorna's books she also found LM Montgomery's *Emily* trilogy, set on Prince Edward Island in Canada. Says Kathy, "My heart went out to Emily who had lost her father and was living with relatives."

Of course she later read LM Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables*. I vividly remember a Kathy-instigated dash in our rental car from New Brunswick to Charlottetown on Prince Edward Island in 2019 to attend *Anne of Green Gables – The Musical* and to explore the LM Montgomery story.

2.5 Farm work

Kathy liked helping her parents with farm work, such as mustering, fencing, and making wooden gates. Sometimes it was just a matter of keeping her dad company as he did farm jobs but as she grew up she was able to make genuine contributions such as catching and lifting up lambs for marking and vaccination against pulpy kidney disease. Another job she loved was feeding and watering the working dogs. She wasn't paid for any of this work until she went to university, and was officially employed by her parents as a jillaroo. Meticulous records were kept of hours worked, and tax stamps were paid. These records later helped Kathy to receive an independent living allowance under her Commonwealth scholarship.

Kathy: Working on the farm

After Dad had his brain tumour Mum and I single-handedly ran the farm for a period. (John was away at school in Kilmore.) Later, when working as a jillaroo, I remember cleaning out a well. Quietly pleased that I had managed to load a long ladder onto the ute by myself, I was less cocky when, in angling the ladder down the well, I was hoisted up on it, narrowly avoiding riding it down the well.

I can also remember going out in the very hot summer sun clearing roots from a ploughed paddock. I guess I'm still a bit prone to venturing out in the heat of the day.

The family kept a house cow and, when at home, John had the responsibility of milking it.

Kathy fondly remembers burning rubbish piles on the farm at night. She liked the flickering flames and the radiating warmth. Later on, she liked to look at the glow of the ember piles dotted around the paddocks.

⁶https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Look_and_Learn Accessed 19 July 2023.

2.6 School

Uneducated	Pat-preferred
gunna	going to
me and Smithy went	Smithy and I went
she chased Jenny and I	she chased Jenny and me
to never split an infinitive	never to split an infinitive
I should of left	I should have left
got rich	became rich
he's got a lot of money	he has a lot of money
I wish I was	I wish I were
...	...

Kathy's mother Pat, like mine, was a stickler for correct grammar and spelling. In that era, people who didn't write or speak well were considered ignorant or uneducated, and often passed over for employment. Pat didn't even approve of apostrophised contractions such as *don't*, criticising Kathy's use of them in her head injury book.

Once, in a spectacular show of defiance of her mother, young Kathy rode her tricycle around the clothes line, loudly calling, "Ain't!", "Ain't!", "Ain't!"

Pat had attended a one-teacher primary school at Creighton, on whose site at the intersection of the Hume Freeway and Creightons Siding Road there is a commemorative plaque on a large rock. Pat wrote a history of the school which you can read starting at Page 198.

Since it burned down in 1943 and the schoolhouse slated for the corner of the Griffiths property was never built, Kathy and her brother travelled by school bus to Euroa primary. They were the last children to be picked up and the last to be dropped off.

Kathy: Seventy-five minutes was a long time to spend on a bus at the end of a school day. However, it did provide plenty of opportunity for me to indulge my love of reading.

At age seven Kathy was diagnosed with a duodenal ulcer by a paediatrician, and it was recommended that it be treated with milk and good diet. Accordingly, Kathy's parents arranged for her to have a proper lunch every day at Mrs Rose's cafe, along the Hume Highway, which then ran through the town. Mrs Rose provided a three course meal including meat and vegetables, plus a dessert and plenty of milk.

Kathy: In those days schools also provided bottles of milk for students. Unfortunately, the milk crates were not infrequently left out in the sun with less than palatable results. I vividly recall the classroom teacher keeping students in the class room at playtime until all the bottles had been claimed and their contents had been consumed.

Harold was very fond of his daughter, making sure that her bed was warmed up in winter with hot water bottle or electric blanket, but at the same time occasionally playing tricks like short-sheeting or inserting a hair brush between the sheets. He used to play tunes on his harmonica and recognized early on that Kathy had a very good singing voice.

Pat had attended Tintern Grammar School in Ringwood East and she and Harold were keen that Kathy should become a boarder there too. Kathy rejected this point blank, and refused to sit the Tintern scholarship exam. Looking back she has absolutely no regrets.

Instead, she attended Euroa Primary and High Schools, which were initially located on the same campus on the Hume Highway near the town centre. Throughout her education she liked school work and was delighted when her parents successfully requested that her teachers give her some extension work, particularly in maths – she loved solving puzzles.

She enjoyed the intellectual aspects of school, but was also good at drama, performing the singing role of Aunt Polly in *Tom Sawyer*. In an inter-house drama festival she was given the best female actor award for her performance as Daphne in *Cloud Over the Morning*, a 1959 play by Thomas Baden

Morris about a Cypriot uprising against the British. A judge who travelled from Albury to adjudicate was very impressed with Kathy's performance and suggested that she had a future as a professional actor.



Creighton School 1934: Kathy's mum is in the middle row, third from the left. Photographer unknown.



A Euroa school bus from 1959. Photo supplied by Don Mills. Says Kathy: *Gene Gamble (the driver) was a lovely man who later owned the nursery in the main street of Euroa. He held a competition at one stage for the kids to draw a picture of the bus. I won it. I remember the prize was a tin of lollies. I don't know what happened to the drawing which I remember was a cartoon with him lying on the top of the bus with the kids pulling the bus along. His bus (or a later one?) stalled on the rail crossing as a train approached!*



Maree Willis for Lost Euroa

Mrs Rose and her husband outside their cafe.



Form 1A, Euroa High School 1966. Kathy is second from left in seated row. Lorraine Crocos is at far right in the same row.

There were downsides to starting school. She hated the 'dirty' toilets, and remembers a shameful comment by her Grade 1 Prep teacher during routine eye testing. Kathy was methodically working through the eye chart when the teacher remarked to the tester, "You can see that the slow ones aren't very bright!" But some in the school were kind. Kathy once found her way to the playground equipment for the older children. In those days, big kid's slides were notorious for resulting in broken arms and other accidents. An older boy kindly took her to the playground for her age.

Kathy was an enthusiastic participant in all of the fads which passed through the school: Yo yos, hula hoops, various forms of skipping, and a quiz about popular TV shows. She was a champion at marbles and amassed a huge collection. Another fad was swap cards, and Pat allowed Kathy to take some vintage cards of elegant women to school with the proviso that she wasn't allowed to swap them. Kathy was perplexed when a male teacher who had been admiring them, surreptitiously palmed one of them into his jacket pocket. Looking back from an adult perspective Kathy wonders whether the woman on that card was particularly 'elegant'.

Victorian primary schools in that era started at least some days of the week with an outdoor assembly, concluding with a marching parade. Kathy liked marching and she also liked it when she was asked to play the record for the marching – *Colonel Bogey* no doubt. Assemblies also involved a pledge of loyalty. Pupils faced the Australian flag with their right hand over their left breast and recited, "I love God and my country. I honour the flag and cheerfully obey my parents, teachers, and the law." Diction must have been less than perfect as Kathy believed it was, "chiefly obey". ☺ By Form 6, Kathy had lost enthusiasm for assemblies, and and skipped them. When asked late in the year why she didn't attend, she said she didn't agree with the pledge or with singing *God Save our Gracious Queen*. "Oh, we haven't done those for months!"

Grade 6 started in 1965 with the time-honoured, "Write a composition on what I did in my holidays." Kathy was upset on behalf of a classmate who, during the holiday, had lost a brother and several cousins in the 1965 Longwood bushfire.

Kathy wasn't good at swimming but her father had taught her how to float and persuaded her she could float forever if necessary. This came in handy when she was staying with Mrs Rose. She and Mrs Rose's grandchildren went to the Seven Creeks pool and Kathy floated in an isolated shallow area. Remarkably, when she accidentally floated into an area too deep for standing she found herself swimming freestyle! Eventually she attained her Junior Certificate, testifying that she could swim 50 metres. She was alarmed when one of a group of 6th grade students who had just completed their Senior Certificate (100m swim, rescue of a swimmer in trouble, and 25m swim fully clothed) got into trouble. One of his recently qualified life-saving colleagues proved incapable of performing an actual rescue and the teacher, Mr Gribbin, had to dive in fully clothed to save the day. Kathy wonders what happened to all the student's watches which he used to keep in his pocket during lessons to protect them from the water.

Arrival at High School was exciting and Kathy enjoyed having specialised teachers, with the notable exception of Geography.⁷ Her favourite subject was English. She continued to enjoy school-work but was bullied by girls who followed her around with a chorus of jibes and insults. Kathy ignored them.

In that era, from Form 3 on, classes were split into Professional and Commercial streams. In the professional stream of course, Kathy was delighted that the school provided a one-year touch-typing course for the professionals. She attained a speed of 60 words-per-minute and regarded typing as the most useful thing she learned at high school.

Generally, high school students were not permitted to enter the school buildings at lunch time. Kathy was delighted when she and Robyn Reid were given dispensation to go inside and play the piano. She was also proud of having conducted her house in an inter-house music competition.

Kathy claims that the athletic ability which she possessed at primary school had largely dissipated by high school. In Form 6 she was, however, crowned as Open Girls Athletics Champion, having won ribbons in many different events. She says that's because girls at that age had generally lost interest in physical activity and were focused on appearance and boyfriends. Some had even become mothers

⁷See next section.

by then.

Kathy admits that she was better at running longer distances, though not the best. In a school cross-country event, Kathy was incorrectly congratulated for being the first girl to finish. Her friend Del Hynds had gone through unnoticed long before, with the faster boys.

Academically Kathy was something of a star, as may be seen in the honour boards below. She managed to be named dux of the school despite being unwell during final exams and consequently achieving lower marks than would be expected on the basis of her subsequent university results.

2.7 Teachers

Some of her teachers were not quite as stellar. In the little booklet handed out by schools at Speech Night it is traditional to list members of staff and their qualifications. At Euroa High in the 1960s it was rare for teachers to have university qualifications such as BEd or BSc. Most had secondary teaching certificates, but one older woman listed her qualifications as GMA. That apparently stood for Grandma, since she had no formal qualifications. GMA taught geography and was a little better at it than one of the other geography teachers who incorrectly taught that Euroa's prevailing summer winds came from the south, that low pressure weather systems in the southern hemisphere rotated anti-clockwise, and that rocks moved uphill due to water contracting when it froze.



Kathy features in both of the Honour Boards at Euroa Secondary College – Dux (1971), Public Speaking (1966). The pictures were taken at a 50th anniversary reunion in March 2017. I don't know why the boards haven't been updated in recent years.

Another ‘teacher’ in Kathy’s final years was a conscientious objector, resisting conscription to fight in the Vietnam war. He seemed to have an objection to teaching too. After teaching one lesson on Chemistry (at Kathy’s insistence) he said, “I can’t do this”, and taught no more. Kathy’s parents were horrified and enrolled her for tutoring by correspondence from Taylors.

In later years at high school Kathy sought out adults for sensible conversation. When her friend Lorraine Short went home for lunch Kathy often chatted with the woman who did the school laundry. In Form 5, Kathy and Lorraine fondly remembered a teacher, Mr Shelton, who would sit with them during Private Study periods in the Physics room and engage in sensible, intelligent conversation.

Kathy questioned the priorities of Euroa High School when Form 6 classes were occasionally cancelled due to teachers accompanying Euroa teams to other towns for inter-school sports. She was also critical of inappropriate scheduling of class rooms. Maths classes were held in a tiny laundry and in the dining room, while science was taught in the geography room!

Miss Papageorge was a significant positive influence on Kathy. She taught Maths and, despite her Greek heritage, French. Outside of normal classes she set Kathy to work designing rat experiments, which possibly influenced Kathy’s career direction.

2.8 Extra-curricular activities

Kathy’s talents were not restricted to school work. In her teenage years she participated in a wide range of competitive endeavours. She has a collection of prize certificates for her victories and near victories at the Euroa Show, in competitions for needlework, craft, and baking. One of the ribbons was for best overall junior needlework. She also won prizes for cooking. We find that a bit amusing since in our house it is I who do the cooking.

She participated in various essay writing competitions and won a total of 30 books in an essay competition organised by Penguin Australia.

Kathy: As I recall, the first year I won third prize Australia wide for a story about a fictitious animal, the jumbat, which lived under Ayers Rock.⁸ I received 25 Penguin or Puffin books of my choosing. This was in early high school. The next year I won fourth prize in Victoria and received more books.

She also received a Pilot Penmanship certificate for her handwriting. Kathy downplays the significance of this:

Kathy: I don’t know that this was anything important, but it does remind me that being a left hander wasn’t easy in the days of inkwells and steel nib pens. For left handers there was a risk of smudging the wet ink as they worked their way along the line. Perhaps that is why in those days schools tried to prevent children from using their left hand to write. I don’t remember it, but my mother said that she had to visit the prep grade teacher and ask her to desist from trying to convert me to writing with my right hand.

She was a member of Ansett-ANA’s Junior Flying Club and, after amassing points in activities Ansett organised in conjunction with Shepparton television station GMV-6,⁹ she became one of two “Top Flyers” in 1965. Ansett-ANA made her an Air Hostess uniform in her size, and invited her to Melbourne early the next year for a tour of Ansett-ANA aircraft and facilities, and a ride in a helicopter. Although the uniform arrived too late to wear, she enjoyed the tour. She also appeared on GMV-6 again to talk about it. Very exciting!

Lorraine Short (née Crocos) remembers that Kathy had a deep knowledge of aeroplanes, and once corrected an inaccurate aircraft claim made by an over-confident boy.

⁸Now called Uluru.

⁹Ansett-ANA were one of two domestic airlines operating in Australia in the 1960s. The other was Trans Australia Airlines.

How Kathy was selected as a Top Flyer

As part of the process of selecting the top flyers (one boy and one girl), we had to be interviewed on television about our knowledge of flying. In the days before Deborah Wardley^a won her sex discrimination case against Ansett Airlines, the boy was top captain and the girl was top hostess.

I think I won because week after week the candidates were asked about the composition of the Ansett fleet and week after week they gave the same wrong answers. When, in the dry run before the program, I was asked the same question I explained that I couldn't give the answer they wanted because it was wrong. In the event, they didn't ask me the question in the live program, perhaps preferring to check the accuracy of my claims! When I was awarded the top spot they remarked that I was selected because of my excellent aviation knowledge.

^alater known as Deborah Lawrie. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deborah_Lawrie Accessed 19 July 2023.



Kathy receiving her trophy from the Chief Fire Officer. She hated the hairstyle, cut especially for the occasion. *The Fireman: The volunteer fireman's paper*, 02 July, 1969

Kathy was an accomplished public speaker. She participated in a competition at school and won the Junior title in 1966, as recorded on the school's honour boards (Page 30). Her talk in the finals of that competition was about Helen Keller.

Although Kathy was a science student her school selected her to present at an inter-school humanities gathering. She presented on women's rights and equality, started off with the neurosurgeon in the operating theatre story:

A father and son were involved in a terrible accident. The father was killed and the boy sustained a head injury which required surgery. Arriving in the operating theatre, the neurosurgeon exclaimed, "My god! It's my son."

In that era, the vast majority of people found this story incredibly difficult to understand, unconsciously rejecting the possibility that a neurosurgeon might be a woman.

The talk focused on the newly published *Female Eunuch*¹⁰ which her mother had told her about. It blew the audience away, and the male Euroa School Captain congratulated her but said, "but of course you don't believe any of that do you!"



Two (rare) photos of high-school-age Kathy.

Another public talk on the subject of *Pollution*. Kathy said that, at the time, people regarded this as a fringe topic with little impact on the general population!

¹⁰Germaine Greer, 1970

Kathy didn't shy away from controversial topics. In Year 11, she launched a school newspaper. The first issue contained a feature she wrote contrasting community attitudes to illicit drugs taken by young people and addictive and more harmful drugs, like alcohol and tobacco, taken by adults. The article caused a major backlash.

She played netball, then called 'women's basketball'. Although the family had no association with organised religion, she initially played for a Methodist team, before joining one from Longwood. The latter team sometimes practised against the adult men of the Longwood Football Club. In a game on an asphalt court with ragged edges, she was tripped and received a major cut on her chin, requiring 20 stitches. Harold wasn't happy!

In 1968, Kathy submitted an entry to a Country Fire Authority competition to design a fire prevention advertisement for television. She won the "Class A, 14 years and over" section of the competition and was awarded \$100¹¹ and a massive Chief Fire Officers Trophy. The CFA had the advertisement made and it screened on Victorian television.

Like other teenagers, Kathy was moved to pin up a poster in her bedroom. Where others chose the Fab Four, Brigitte Bardot, or the Rolling Stones, she pinned Albert Einstein on her door.

2.9 Parental Illness

Kathy's family life in Creighton was disrupted by serious illnesses suffered by her parents.

In around 1959 Pat fell victim to breast cancer. In that era, radical mastectomy with removal of all armpit lymph nodes was routine. It caused long-lasting problems with her arm.

Pat survived for more than 30 years but suffered recurrences, and was badly burned by radiation treatment. A strange operation involving moving the stomach above the diaphragm was performed to try to regrow skin on her chest but this may have led to the stomach cancer which eventually killed her in 1994.

During Pat's initial treatment at the Peter McCallum Institute in Melbourne Kathy lived for a while with her Auntie Corrie on a farm in Murchison, attending a one-teacher school with 11 pupils. While running along a stony road on the Carlson's farm, she fell and split the area above her eyebrow on a sharp stone. Harold drove over from Euroa, picked her up and took her to the doctor who inserted a metal clip.

Unfortunately, family life was again disrupted by illness in 1966 while Harold was working as an engineer on roadworks near Yea. Contrary to his reputation for being 'always right', he wrote down wrong numbers and suffered bad headaches. He also suffered a 'turn', temporarily being unable to use his arms and legs. Consulting a doctor in Euroa, he was told that he focused on himself too much! Fortunately, Pat managed to arrange an appointment with a neurologist, through her specialist in Melbourne.

Harold underwent extremely painful *air encephalography*¹² to diagnose the problem and ultimately had a mandarin-sized meningioma removed. Unfortunately, the surgeon didn't do an ideal job in replacing the piece of skull and his head retained a large bump forever after.

He spent about a month in hospital, with no radiotherapy or chemotherapy needed, and no rehabilitation provided. During that time Pat stayed in Melbourne with her mother-in-law Ruth Griffiths, and Kathy lived with her grandparents at Ellalea. (At the time, John was boarding at Assumption College in Kilmore.) Grandad Jack drove her across the paddocks to catch the school bus, and Kathy remembers dropping her school beret en route. Walking back to find it, she had difficulty distinguishing it from the many cowpats in the paddock!¹³

¹¹Equivalent to about \$1300 in 2021

¹²<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pneumoencephalography> Accessed 19 July 2023.

¹³Searching was made more difficult because it was a cold morning and beret and cowpats were frosted over.



**Harold in the kitchen at Creighton, recovering from the 1966 operation to remove a meningioma.
Photographer unknown.**

Harold arrived home unable to speak, and had difficulty walking. He read the dictionary to help restore his vocabulary. Although the tumour was not malignant, it caused lasting paresis (weakness) on his right side, and changes to his personality. He did well and truly recover his ability to speak, completely casting aside the proverb “silence is golden.” He and Kathy engaged in lengthy arguments, bringing out each other’s persistence and determination. Once, Kathy gave him a card depicting contorted wrestling bodies and with the text, “Agree with me now. It will save so much time.” Harold seemed a little nonplussed, but he pinned it to the toilet door in the old house.

Another meningioma was removed during the last years of his life.

The stress of Pat’s breast cancer and its treatment, and Harold’s brain tumour unsurprisingly caused Pat a lot of worry and unhappiness. Pat’s more general sadness at trends in her world can be seen at the end of her history of Creighton School on Page 202. It upset Kathy when she said, as she sometimes did, “this could be our last Christmas together.” Kathy says she worried a lot as a child about her parents dying – perhaps another reason that she identified so strongly with Emily.

2.10 Friends

Kathy’s home at Creighton was a long way from other children of her own age. She only very rarely had friends visiting or staying over because Pat was very reluctant to welcome visitors to the old house. Kathy tended to have one or two close friends rather than a large circle, and this preference has continued to the present.

She was friends with Lois Ferguson, daughter of a local undertaker and quarry owner, but Lois transferred to grammar school in Melbourne. In early high school, she and Pam Bond were close, but the friendship waned. She later teamed up with Robyn Reid, a year behind her at school but very bright and very creative. Kathy and Robyn were members of the Euroa High School debating team, and had lots of fun travelling to nearby towns to compete with other teams. Kathy remembers amazing manipulations in the arguments they used to trounce Seymour High School on the topic, “That Progress is a Good Thing.”

The honour boards depicted on Page 30 show that Robyn Reid won the Junior Public Speaking award in 1968 after Kathy in 1966. A couple of other public speeches are mentioned on Page 33.

Kathy's best friend at high school was Lorraine Short, and the friendship has endured to the present. Lorraine remembers Kathy playing Aunt Polly in a school production of the musical *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and her giving a speech entitled *All The World's A Stage* in Euroa town hall. It was based on the book *The Great Impostor* by Robert Crichton, a biography of Ferdinand Waldo Demara, who served in the military, became a Trappist monk, impersonated a prison warden, carried out dental work and performed surgery. The punchline of the film based on the book is that the FBI eventually recruited an agent to track down the Great Impostor, but the agent was Demara himself!

Kathy says that her talk contained a hidden message which no-one really got. Lorraine was stunned when a teacher said he couldn't understand why Kathy called the talk, *All The World's A Stage*!

Once when Lorraine stayed at Kathy's farm Kathy took her for a drive around the paddocks. Unlike Kathy who had been driving for ages, Lorraine was nonplussed when Kathy switched seats and asked her to have a drive.

As mentioned elsewhere Harold had been a driving instructor in the army and supervised Kathy on her learner plates. Despite his experience, he decided that she should have formal tuition from someone outside the family. He engaged a local taxi driver. Near the end of her first lesson the taxi driver said, "Follow that police car." Kathy did so, and parked behind it outside the police station. She was ushered inside and given her oral driving test, made more difficult by not having seen the Victorian Road Rules booklet beforehand. Perhaps surprisingly she passed and managed to get the precise wording of the answer to the question about how close to a kerb should you park – "As close as practicable."

When Kathy and I visited Lorraine recently, the two of them reminisced about wild behaviour on the part of other students on school excursions to Harrierville and to Sydney by train. They also remembered thinking that the school's science facilities were quite dangerous due to the actions of one boy who often took dangerous materials like potassium and white phosphorus from the science service room and caused small fires and minor explosions.

In the very small cohort of about 12 student who made it to the end of high school, Lorraine and Kathy were the ones who most valued academic achievement and the only girls to do the science and maths subjects. They were the only Euroa graduates that year to go on to university.

Lorraine went to Melbourne University to do a BSc (Ed), but only spent three years as a teacher, two years in Melbourne and one in Euroa. She met and later married Ian Short on the dance circuit, and until recently lived on a superfine merino farm out of Strathbogie. Unfortunately, she too has been plagued with chronic illness.

Next door to Grandma Griffiths's house at 85 Illawarra Rd, Hawthorn, where Kathy spent many summer holidays, lived the Warmingtons. Stuart Warmington was a renowned architect and Kathy was good friends with his daughter Bobbie (Robina). Bobbie's family moved to Barkers Road a few kilometres away but still in Hawthorn. During primary school Kathy stayed with the Warmingtons there at least once and was astonished that the children were expected to have an afternoon nap. She remembers reading the *Agony* and the *Ecstasy*¹⁴ during these nap times.

Through Bobbie, Kathy met Isobel Sherrin who also lived in Illawarra Road and, like Bobbie, attended MLC.¹⁵ Isobel was the daughter of Tom Sherrin who, at the time, ran the company who made Sherrin Aussie Rules footballs, and who, although he lived in Hawthorn, was president of the Collingwood Football Club.

Kathy: I remember being very amused that, despite her father's connections, Isobel barracked for Carlton! Across the road lived a girl whose mother had been a member of the Australian women's cricket team to compete in England, probably in the 1930s. In the early 1960s this was quite a novelty and I was deeply impressed. Once in high school I enjoyed (not!) the doubtful

¹⁴Irving Stone's biographical novel of Michelangelo – rather adult reading for children young enough to require naps!

¹⁵Methodist Ladies College.

pleasure of *vigoro*¹⁶ at a time when cricket was not an available option as a school sport for girls. Later however we were fortunate that our senior mistress was a cricket player and introduced cricket for girls. I opted to join in though I don't remember being particularly good at it.

Kathy got on very well with the families of her Hawthorn friends.

2.11 Dogs

Kathy loved the sheep dogs on the farm, first the highly credentialled Don, and then Nod. She also trained puppies. As noted on Page 52 her parents eventually allowed her to have a house dog, Titch the chihuahua. In adulthood her love of dogs has continued. We had mixed-breed Cassie obtained from the pound, then Rose the papillon, and most recently Pippa, a cavoodle who arrived thanks, indirectly, to then Prime Minister Julia Gillard.

In January 2012, Kathy and I were invited to an Australia Day function at the Prime Minister's Lodge. The function immediately followed an event at a nearby restaurant which had been taken over by demonstrators. Julia had been forcefully evacuated by her security detail and lost a shoe. To her credit, her first concern was for the safety of the opposition leader (Tony Abbott) who was also present.

Julia was totally unruffled by what should have been a scary experience. Unlike Tony Abbott at the corresponding event in 2014, she personally welcomed each of her guests and, in contrast to her often wooden television interviews, made a warm and funny speech.

Not only did Kathy and I meet Julia and partner Tim Mathieson, but we also encountered their dog Reuben, who made a strong impression on Kathy. She soon tracked down Reuben's breeder and selected a female puppy. Pippa arrived in Canberra rather unsettled by her flight and Kathy slept the first few nights in the laundry to reassure her. Later, Pippa returned the favour when Kathy was 'unsettled' by events at work.

I was very reluctant to have a dog sleeping in the house at all, but Kathy and Pippa wore me down and Pippa eventually slept on (not in!) our bed. She spent most of her time within close proximity to one or both of us, often halfway between us. When Kathy worked at her computer on a sun lounge in the back yard, Pippa would lie at her feet or under the lounge. She accompanied us on many of our walks and comfortably walked up to 15km.

Pippa was a very gentle dog, apart from an innate desire (and ability) to hunt rabbits. At the farm, she would go wild with their smell. Once while walking with me at night, she ripped the lead out of my hand, dived under a bush and killed a near full-grown rabbit.

She was very patient and, when she wanted to come inside, would politely bark once and then sit and wait. She could easily have raided the bag containing her food but was content to wait for it to be put in her bowl. When our son Jack and his wife Erika acquired a dog we had to move Pippa's food supply three shelves higher.

Pippa seemed to enjoy watching television, though only for about 15 minutes at a time. She was particularly interested in animals appearing on the screen, and could instantly identify an animal from a tiny, barely discernible image. If the animal was a dog, she would bark with maximum enthusiasm, jumping up and down with her floppy ears flapping. Horses were given somewhat scaled down treatment, and other animals like elephants were met with noises indicating uncertainty. When we first hung Erika's painting of Pippa, she barked at it!

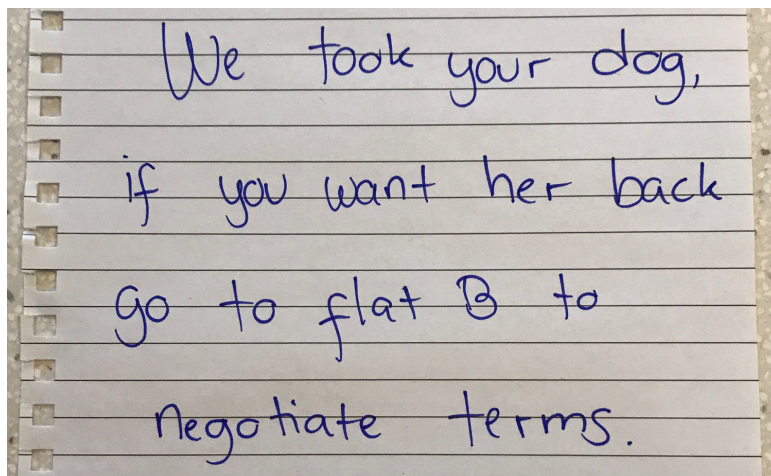
In the early days she interpreted the TV as a kind of window and would rush around to the room behind the television to greet the friend or foe.

To our great sorrow, Pippa died recently at the age of ten, and Kathy is still grief stricken. Pippa had friends everywhere and it was not only within the family that tears were shed.

¹⁶<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vigoro> Accessed 20 July 2023.



Julia Gillard welcoming Kathy to the 2012 Australia Day function at the Lodge. Julia's father was a psychiatric nurse and, in 2017 she became Chair of Beyond Blue. Official photo.



Jack and Erika loved Pippa too. She would visit them in their backyard flat, usually voluntarily. ☺



Pippa, 2012-2022

Chapter 3

Pat Griffiths, née Threlfall, Kathy's mother

Patricia Alice Threlfall, 1924–1994. b. Euroa, d. Creighton



Photo of Pat, taken in Melbourne in 1944, by a leading photographer at his request.

Patricia (Pat) grew up in the house now known as Creighton with her sister Corinne (Corrie) and her parents Jack and Alice (née Burke). The property for a while was known as Coricia (Corrie and Patricia).

After attending Creighton State School, Pat boarded at Tintern private school in Melbourne from the age of 11. She excelled academically, coming in the top few in Victoria in some of her Leaving Honours subjects.¹ Her teachers wanted her to study Medicine² but she decided she wanted to be a vet. Unfortunately, she was told at the University of Melbourne that the Professor of Veterinary Science did not allow women to enrol. Dejected, she instead enrolled at Melbourne Teachers College on Grattan Street in Carlton, now part of the University of Melbourne and known as the 1888 Building.

Kathy retains various lesson materials prepared by her mother. One was a book of lesson plans she prepared while prac teaching as part of her course. By my standards they are impeccable, creative and diligently prepared. On many of the pages, the supervising teacher has scrawled comments (usually positive) on how the teaching of the lesson had gone and giving advice. These comments were far less neat than Pat's work. I think that the endless supervision made Pat very nervous.

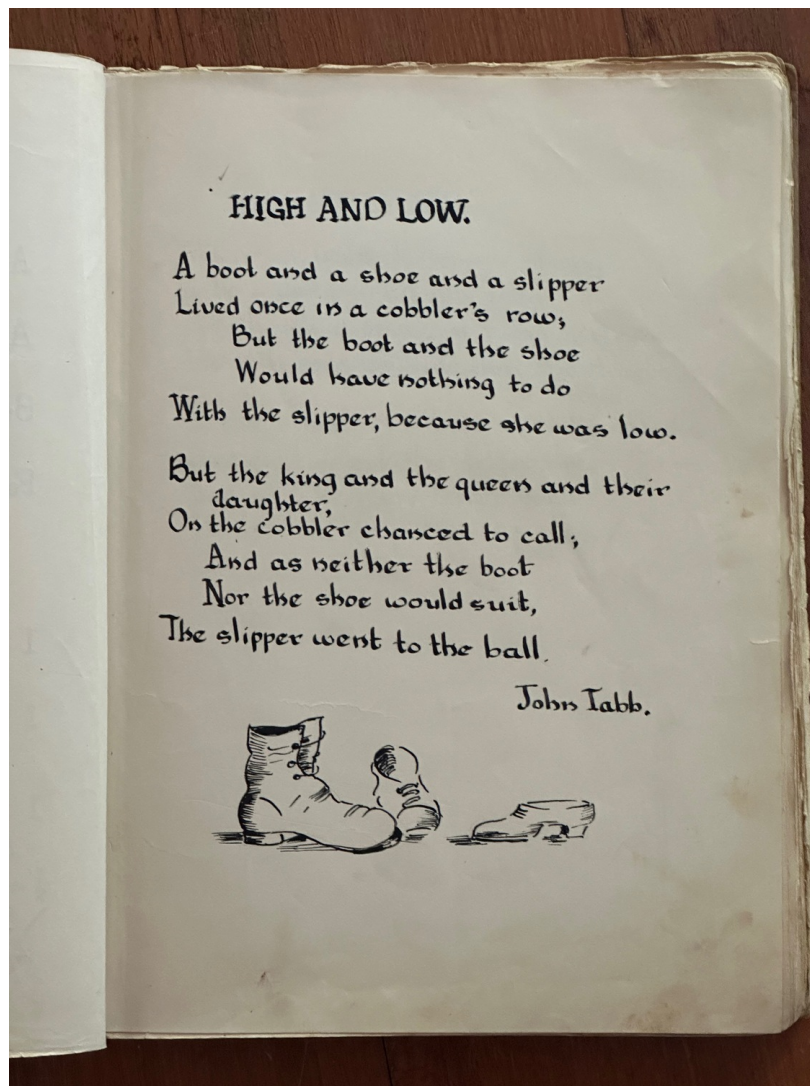
Another booklet Pat prepared was an anthology of poems. They are all written with very neat calligraphy and many are illustrated with little sketches.

Lesson 1	Peter Rabbit.	Prep.	S.W. Brun.
Story.		1/3/45.	15 min.
Aim.	To give chn. pleasure and to interest them in story of Peter Rabbit		
Preparation.	Previous readings of story		
Presentation.	<p>Step I. Tell chn. that to-day we are going to have a story about Peter Rabbit. Begin story straight away showing pictures at appropriate points.</p> <p>Outline of Story.</p> <p>Once upon a time there were four little rabbits, Flopsy, Mopsy, Cotton-tail and Peter.</p> <p>One day old Mrs. Rabbit went to the baker's. Flopsy, Mopsy, and Cotton-tail went to pick blackberries, but Peter went straight to Mr. McGregor's garden.</p> <p>There he met Mr. McGregor who chased</p>		

One of Pat's lesson plans. Note her beautiful watercolour of Peter Rabbit.

¹She completed both Leaving and Leaving Honours.

²Perhaps ruled out by finances?



A page from Pat's teaching anthology.

On graduation as a teacher, she taught first at Broadford, boarding with Mena and Charles Conder. Mena (Minnie) became a lifelong friend. After Broadford she taught at Port Melbourne until her marriage. In that era, women had to resign when they married. Pat only taught for a few short years which, given her intelligence, love of language, and meticulous preparation seems like a significant loss to the profession.

When I visited Kathy at the farm in 1972, and talked about my family background, Pat put two and two together and realised that my mother Margaret (who had died of breast cancer eleven years earlier) had not only been a fellow student at teachers college, but had taught with her at Broadford, *and boarded in the same house!* (I don't think Pat and Margaret were particularly good friends and they hadn't maintained contact. Both of them had married, changed names, and left the teaching profession. It is entirely possible that Kathy and I may never have known of the connection between our mothers.)

Pat's sister Corrie also attended Tintern and became friends with Mary Carlson whose parents managed the Cathedral Hotel³ on Swanston Street in Melbourne. Corrie eventually married Mary's brother John. John and Mary's parents were very kind to Pat, accommodating her at the hotel for the duration of her course of radiotherapy. Kathy ate Christmas lunch there that year and still has the printed menu.

Pat was a strategic thinker and felt a strong desire to help her children get a start in life. She and Harold provided loans for Kathy and me to buy a house and then a better one, and she and Harold gave Kathy the funds to buy shares in the Commonwealth Bank (CBA), Woolworths, and

³<https://victoriancollections.net.au/items/578f6240d0cdd41500254063>

Fairfax floats. CBA shares have been a very successful investment! Of course Pat and Harold also generously helped John with housing and with establishing his medical practice.

Kathy: I think a significant factor was the high value mum (and dad) placed on education, in contrast to the prevailing community attitudes of relative indifference to learning and where sport, particularly male sport, was king. Furthermore my mother fostered our understanding of political and social issues and current affairs. I suspect that our conversations at home differed markedly from those of most of my peers and I was definitely an appreciative beneficiary of that. At the same time I never felt undue pressure to excel academically.

British history and literature was a passion of Pat's. She was familiar with all the classics and she was in heaven when she had the opportunity to travel to the UK with a friend in 1977. She knew the history of all the buildings and gardens they visited⁴ and relished the bringing alive of the people and events she'd known only from books.

Kathy: I remember being most impressed when mum pointed out a significant error in a history book about Australia. Fancy my mum knowing better than the academic who had written it. Now, after my own years in academia, I am a little less surprised that academics are not always right!

On the farm, Pat had significant livestock expertise.



A scene inside the shearing shed at Creighton. In front is the classing table. From right to left at rear is a bale of fine merino wool (yet to be closed and compressed), a hydraulic bale press, and a pile of lower quality wool skirtings. Photo: Harold.

⁴Better than the tourist guides!

Kathy: Dad was the qualified wool classer and did that during shearing. Mum exercised her skills in selective breeding, inspecting the quality of the wool of each sheep in the race, and marking those not up to standard with a dry raddle (a coloured marker) across their backs to indicate that they should be culled from the flock. Early on, my parents introduced a system of numbering all ear tags and recording fleece weight at shearing for each sheep to assist in selecting the highest yielding sheep.



In 1977, Pat won a significant prize from a pesticide company and used it to buy two rams from their usual stud supplier Hazeldene. A report in *Weekly Times* of 13 Dec, 1978 shows that, in the following year, she won a pair of Warrnambool blankets and a ram or rams to the value of \$1000 in a Win-a-ram competition.

Pat was very sensitive and unfortunately had an occasional tendency to interpret attempted compliments as backhanded criticisms. She was a polite and moral person but on the other hand she had a great sense of humour and told jokes, which at the time would have been considered 'unladylike'.

At about 2am a country doctor was sleeping soundly when the phone rang. "Doctor, come quickly! The baby's swallowed a condom!"

The doctor dragged himself out of his warm bed, washed the sleep out of his eyes, struggled into his clothes and picked up his medical bag. He was just opening the door to leave when the phone rang again. "Don't worry doctor. We found another one."

Driving along the rough track along the railway line to the other half of their property, Harold and Pat came across a panel van which was rocking vigorously. Somewhat embarrassed, Pat nonetheless managed to greet the couple with, "Nice day for it."

An American condom manufacturer received an order for 150 million condoms from a Russian buyer. Wonderful for business but problematic because the requested size was 18 inches by four!

After much head scratching the factory owner accepted the order but saved American male honour by stamping all the packets MEDIUM SIZE.

For a couple of decades the inside of the toilet door at Creighton was adorned with a twisted piece of wood, labelled in perfectly executed calligraphy by Pat as "Hornicus Fornicus Vulgaris, common name Root."

According to our next door neighbour and former shearer Doug Halsall, she greeted him in the shearing shed with, "Well Doug, who's up who and who's not paying?"⁵



Shearers at work in the Griffiths woolshed. Photo: Harold.

⁵I'm sure Pat would actually have asked, "who's up *whom*?"



For a time, Pat and Harold looked after some alpaccas owned by son John. They found them very interesting and rather different to merino sheep. Here Pat is giving a treat to some newly shorn alpaccas. Note the famous Furphy tank in the background. The motto on the end panel reads, "Good, better, best. Never let it rest, until your good is better and your better best."



A rather unusual conjunction of koala and alpaccas. The koala had wandered across the farm and, surprised by humans, alpaccas, and Sam the chihuahua, had sought refuge in what turned out to be a rather short tree.

3.1 Manning the radios

The Euroa Gazette of 20 December, 1983 reports an event organised by the Euroa Group of Fire Brigades to honor Pat and Harold for their many years of service in fire control. Pat and Harold operated the Euroa sub-base and much of the communications monitoring load fell to Pat. In the Gazette article, mention is made of two citizens band radios, a VHF set, and a telephone. I thought there were actually two telephones, one to the Euroa exchange and the other direct to Civil Defence headquarters. Imagine the calmness required when all of these devices were calling simultaneously.



Creighton CFA sub-base: Pat talking on the VHF radio with her finger on one of the maps Harold drew.
Photo: Harold.

3.2 Gardening

Pat loved plants and gardening. Around the old house there were fruit trees of many varieties. There was a valencia orange tree, an old variety of lime, and a magnificent navel orange which produced the best tasting fruit I have ever experienced. How devastated I was that it died during a drought when the farm was unoccupied. There were nectarines, peaches, apples, and almonds, and Pat even managed to grow an avocado tree from seed which produced delicious cocktail avocados.

Cooling the house through planting greenery was a major Pat project. Around the house she planted grape vines, figs, wisteria, calistemons, a banksia rose, tree of heaven, and a variety of other leafy plants I don't recognise. Although he built a large pine-log pergola for it to grow on, Harold hated the all-conquering wisteria which still invades the old house and which has at last reached the top of the 10m tall radio tower.

Pat was amused when a ring-tail possum began nesting in the grape vine above the path to the kitchen. It seemed oblivious to humans and their need to dodge its tail which hung down over the path. Pat loved the bird life on the farm, and liked having willie wagtail nests under the verandah outside the kitchen. She particularly liked the song of the shrike thrushes who were regular visitors.

Keeping green grass around the house was good for summer cooling and also a defence against bush fire. Pat planted kikuyu grass which tolerated dry conditions better than usual lawn grasses. It turns yellow in a drought but can be quickly greened up with water. It has long runners which will grow up a hose if left on the ground for too long.

On summer evenings Pat made numerous trips outside to move the sprinklers. One of them was fed from the windmill and would only water when the wind was blowing. Despite Harold's insistence that visitors always wear shoes because of the risk of bindii, corkscrew and storks bill seeds, Pat always roamed around in bare feet despite developing thick calluses and cracks around her heels.

Pat beefed up soil with sheep manure and kitchen scraps and grew vegetables despite predation from possums and rabbits. However, her greatest pleasure came from flowers. In her declining years she established a magnificent cottage garden.



1993: A small part of Pat's magnificent cottage garden at the front of the old house. Unfortunately it's all gone now, as can be seen in the 2022 photo on Page 19. Photo: Harold.

Pat planted belladonna lilies far and wide. We're still treated to an annual show out at the front gate and on the track past the old orchard.

3.3 Arts and crafts

Pat was very artistic and showed her skills in many art and craft endeavours. Kathy remembers her mother decorating her school books with exquisite little drawings. I was struck by a remarkable colour drawing of Titch the chihuahua which she rendered on the lid of a shoe box.

She was very skilled at bark painting and making art from pressed flowers. I also remember her doing batik with Kathy in the early days of our relationship.



Pat's Ashford spinning wheel from New Zealand.

As a sheep farmer, she was interested in every aspect of wool and its uses. She and Harold couldn't countenance running coloured sheep on the farm for fear of contaminating fine white wool with coloured fibres but Pat obtained coloured wool from other farms and dyed their own wool using natural dyes from eucalypt and other leaves.

She bought a hand carding machine and a spinning wheel and was an expert spinner. She was able to produce remarkably uniform thread with her spinning wheel and laughed uproariously at the efforts of others, like me, who were invited to try their hand. Kathy wondered what was the point of spinning so evenly that the result looked as though it were machine-spun.

Kathy: She was able to spin the fine merino wool from our sheep, a substantially more challenging task than working with coarser wools. She converted the wool she spun into exquisite fine lace shawls. At the other end of the spectrum she once knitted me a bush walking jumper that she had intentionally not pre-washed. She reasoned that the lanolin laden jumper would protect me from the rain.

It was indeed very effective for that purpose. However, it did have a tendency to resemble a stiff board in the cold of a Canberra morning before it softened with the warmth of my body. It also exuded a rather sheepy aroma. It was perhaps just as well that it was intended for outdoor use!



For Kathy's birthday in 1991, Pat made this beautiful arrangement of pressed flowers. After 32 years hanging on our wall, the colours have somewhat faded, but the beauty remains. Kathy received two other similar works on other occasions.



One of Pat's amazing bark paintings.

Naturally, Pat was a knitter. She knitted jumpers from the wool she spun and also from bought wool. She made me several jumpers. One was a white one made from bulky, commercially available, unspun wool. She knitted it using huge needles which looked to me like cricket stumps.⁶ Another was of handspun wool in a palette of natural colours. I loved them.

Kathy: Mum and I once pooled our efforts a couple of days before Xmas to knit you a jumper complete with cables. We presented the finished gift on 25 December. What you thought of this woollen garment on that hot and dry day I have no idea. Nor do I remember if we insisted that you model it.

3.4 Final illness

Pat was never free of the cancer she acquired in 1959 or its consequences, and suffered terribly. In 1993, she went for a gastroscopy, and the specialist in Melbourne was in tears when he reported a finding of advanced stomach cancer. Kathy and particularly Harold were very upset, but Pat was calm and said she was less concerned by the fact of her death than by the manner of her passing. She asked Kathy to support Harold by driving them home.

Harold and Kathy nursed Pat in the lounge room at Creighton over the months until her death in April 1994. Harold became an expert adminsterer of morphine and designed and built improvements to the morphine pump.

Pat thought that funerals were a waste of flowers and just made people sad. She expressed a wish that there should be no flowers and that no-one should attend the funeral except Harold, Kathy and John. Harold, as her executor, carried out her wishes and refused to allow John's wife Lyn to put flowers on the coffin on its way to the Fawkner crematorium in Melbourne. This resulted in a blazing row and John refused to attend the funeral, instead hitch-hiking back to his home in Kilmore.

In a random notebook, after her death, Harold found that she had written the following:

My Requiem
Death was near.
Your eyes held fear.
But I said,
"At last."

After Harold's death we found a scrap of paper on which he had written:

I do not cry for me.
But for Pat
Who suffered so,
She said, "AT LAST"

3.5 Pat's legacy to Kathy

Kathy has obviously inherited her mother's intelligence and strategic thinking and, to a lesser extent, her sensitivity. She has also inherited Pat's love of reading, and of crafts and things artistic. Kathy's former PhD students will have no doubt that Kathy inherited her mother's abhorrence of ungrammatical writing! Unfortunately (or fortunately) Pat's memory for jokes, blue or otherwise, was not passed on.

⁶Kathy says that this is an exaggeration.

3.6 Kathy's ancestors on her mother's side

3.6.1 Alice Threlfall, née Burke, Kathy's maternal grandmother

Alice Burke, 1895–1981 b. Longwood, Vic, d. Euroa, Vic

Alice Burke was a skilled horsewoman and was the first female jockey to ride in a professional horse race in Australia. Her deeds were reported in *Woman's Day* (see Page 53) and on a popular midday television show – The Mike Walsh show. Alice was also a talented artist and we are fortunate to have several of her paintings. She used to take care of orphaned lambs and feed them in the house. It was a bit disconcerting for visitors when fully-grown former lambs pushed their way into the house and demanded to be fed.

Kathy: Fully grown sheep pounding down the corridor are quite a confronting and unexpected sight. Grandma was completely unfazed.

Alice was a keen and skilled seamstress and regularly subscribed to *McCall's Needlework and Crafts Magazine*.⁷ Kathy enjoyed perusing its pages and completed some of the projects. Alice and Pat were regular attendees at the Country Women's Association (CWA) in Longwood. Kathy remembers one occasion where the Creighton children accompanying their mothers to CWA were locked in a store room by the Longwood children. No doubt inspired by the Famous Five, Kathy's brother John engineered an escape by sliding newspaper under the door and pushing the key out of the lock on to it.

On Kathy's 21st birthday, Alice gave her a Bernina sewing machine. We were slightly sceptical about its 30-year warranty but forty-eight years later it is still going strong.

In her final years at high school, Kathy persuaded her parents to let her have a chihuahua, called Titch. Titch slept in a box in Kathy's bed room. When Jack Threlfall died in 1971, grief-stricken Alice came to live for a while with Pat and Harold. Titch found himself sleeping with Alice, under the blankets, and no-one had the heart to chase him out.

In later years Titch established his territory on Pat's lap and would snarl and bare his teeth at anyone who tried to dislodge him, including Pat! He apparently found this type of situation very stressful because of the conflict between defending his territory and being nice to his friends. He would sometimes relieve the internal conflict by jumping off Pat's lap.

Alice's parents were Thomas Burke and Jane Jackson. Jane's father was William James Jackson and his parents (Kathy's great great great grandparents) were two convicts transported to Van Diemen's Land: James Jackson (*Surrey*, 1817) and Catherine Jane (Kitty) Bannister (*Sovereign*, 1827).⁸ They married in 1829. Kitty and James led wild lives, engaging in mutual domestic violence and committing crimes in Tasmania. It appears that Kitty was a sex worker and James was her pimp. One of their children, Frederick was drowned when the *Zephyr* was wrecked off South East Tasmania. His older brother William (Kathy's great great grandfather) was also shipwrecked, on the Kent Group Islands in Bass Strait. His 1906 obituary⁹ in the *Talbot Leader* records that he subsisted for several weeks on mutton birds and their eggs before being rescued.

Kitty and her second husband William Dann later moved to Talbot in the Victorian goldfields, 51km north of Ballarat, where Kitty became a respected figure in the community despite committing bigamy and running a brothel! If tendencies toward crime and notoriety are at all genetic, the genes died out well before Kathy.

⁷<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/McCall%27s> Accessed 19 July 2023.

⁸Kathy has thoroughly researched, documented and written up Kitty's very colourful life. A chapter (pp. 182–189) in *Convict Lives at the George Town Female Factory*, edited by Alison Alexander and published by Convict Women's Press, Hobart 2014 is devoted to Kitty. <https://www.convictwomenspress.com.au/index.php/cl-gt> Accessed 19 July 2023.

⁹<https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Jackson-7602> Accessed 19 July 2023.

In 1914 tiny Alice Burke rode Tenneriffe into second place FIRST LADY AT THE BARRIER

When the Australian Jockey Club announced that women may ride in races against men, many people believed that new ground had been broken.

But women riders on Australian racetracks aren't anything new. Sixty-four years ago, on May 25, 1914, a young girl called Alice Burke rode in a race at Longwood racecourse, Victoria.

Mrs Alice Trelfall, now 82, remembers that day well.

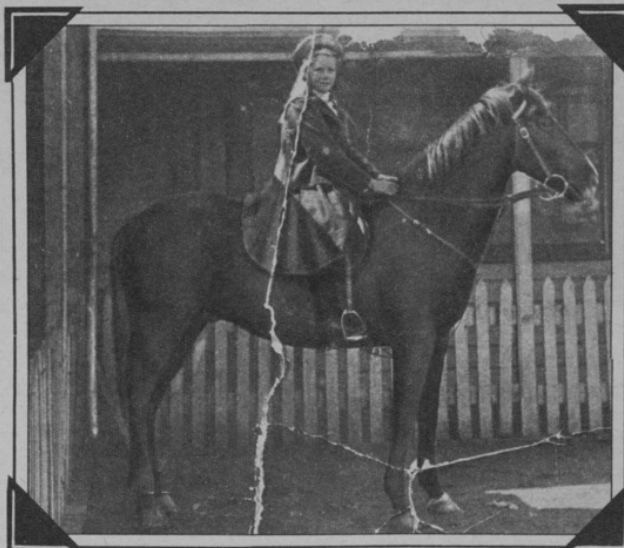
"I rode a thoroughbred pony called Tenneriffe that was trained by my father," she said. "We had to get special permission from the Victorian Racing Club for me to ride on a registered racecourse. Of course, I was the only girl in the race and the racegoers had never seen a girl ride a racehorse, much less ride astride and not sidesaddle. They were horrified."

Mrs Trelfall, then 18, came second in the race. "I was only beaten by a whisker," she laughed. "If Dad hadn't held the horse for too long at the start I would have won."

"Dad used to train racehorses, and he had a mare called Rob's Daughter that he couldn't ride because she bucked. One day he legged me up on to her bareback and she didn't do a thing. From then on I used to ride her bareback all the time."

Alice became well known around Longwood for not riding sidesaddle. Many of the townspeople were disgusted, but other horse trainers respected her riding ability.

"Dad wanted to give a horse barrier practice," Mrs Trelfall remembers. "But the jockey wouldn't ride her out of the stalls. He said she was too fresh and lively. So I got on and jumped her out a few times and afterwards the jockey came to



Top: Mrs Alice Trelfall (then Alice Burke) on her first horse.
Above: Mrs Trelfall at Glen Appin stud with champion racehorse Reckless.

me and said he was ashamed of himself. He won a race on her the next day."

Another time Alice was riding through Longwood when two ladies saw her.

"Look at this," said one in horror. "It's a woman riding astride. Oh, Good Heavens, it's a girl!"

Mrs Trelfall didn't hear the remarks, but her mother, who did, told her afterwards. Mrs

Trelfall's mother viewed her daughter's daring riding with a mixture of pride in her abilities and fear that she would hurt herself.

"Every morning my mother would climb up the hill outside our house. There she could get a good view of the Longwood racecourse," said Mrs Trelfall.

"She would watch me ride from up there. She never allowed me to ride anybody else's

horses and she wouldn't let me jump."

Though she was riding on racetracks long before today's women jockeys were born, Mrs Trelfall hesitates when asked what she thinks of the Australian Jockey Club's decision to allow women jockeys.

"I just don't know," she said. "I am all for women's races and I think women should certainly be allowed to ride at registered meetings. But ride against men? I just don't know . . ."

Mrs Trelfall says that women haven't the strength in their shoulders that men have. But she admits that she could hold a pulling horse as well as any man by making a "bridge" of the reins.

"I think women are able to handle a horse better than men. They are more sensitive. I would love to be about now and ride in races. But ride against men like Roy Higgins . . . well, I'm just not a women's libber," she said.

Mrs Trelfall married Jack Trelfall, a local boy, when she was 25.

"I can't remember how we met," she said. "But I know he wasn't interested in horses."

"He suddenly became interested to impress Mum," chipped in daughter Corinne.

"My daughters are horse lovers, too," said Mrs Trelfall. "We drove Jack mad with our antics."

Mrs Trelfall was thrilled when *Woman's Day* took her to Glen Appin Stud at Avenel, near Longwood, to see champion racehorse stallion Reckless.

"Oh, he's lovely," she exclaimed. "What a beautiful horse. I always listen to the races even now and I've heard all about him."

"It's lovely to see such a beautiful horse because we haven't had one at home for years. I still love horses though. I've still got my old exercise saddle if anyone wants it."

By JOANNE FOWLER

Photographs: Lynette Zeeng

WOMAN'S DAY, May 22, 1978 9

Feature article from *Woman's Day*, May 22, 1978. Note the consistent misspelling of Threlfall.



Paintings by Alice Threlfall, Kathy's grandmother.

3.6.2 Jack Threlfall, Kathy's maternal grandfather

Alexander John Thomas Threlfall, 1896–1971, b. Longwood, Vic, d. Longwood, Vic

Kathy loved her Grandad Jack. I never met him but he was clearly a very colourful character. He served as a machine gunner in the AIF in France during World War I, participating in the 1918 Australian capture of Villers-Bretonneux in the Somme, northern France. He survived the 1919 influenza pandemic and arrived home to find that his father George had died the day before, leaving him as head of the family.



Kathy and me outside Victoria School in Villers-Bretonneux, the town Grandad Jack fought to recapture in 1918. Photo: Jean-Pierre Thierry

The photo above was taken on our 1985 visit to the towns in the Somme department of northern France which were mentioned in Jack's diary. I've described that remarkable visit in Chapter 8 of *Europe on Five Ideas a Day*, online in PDF at <https://david-hawking.net/books/5Ideas.pdf>

The English version of the plaque on Victoria School reads:

THIS SCHOOL BUILDING IS THE GIFT OF THE SCHOOL CHILDREN OF **VICTORIA**, AUSTRALIA TO THE CHILDREN OF **VILLERS-BRETONNEUX** AS A PROOF OF THEIR LOVE AND GOOD-WILL TOWARDS FRANCE. **TWELVE HUNDRED** AUSTRALIAN SOLDIERS, THE FATHERS AND BROTHERS OF THESE CHILDREN, GAVE THEIR LIVES IN THE HEROIC RECAPTURE OF THIS TOWN FROM THE INVADER ON 24TH APRIL, 1918 AND ARE BURIED NEAR THIS SPOT. MAY THE MEMORY OF GREAT SACRIFICES IN COMMON CAUSE KEEP FRANCE AND AUSTRALIA TOGETHER IN BONDS OF FRIENDSHIP AND MUTUAL ESTEEM.

Grandad Jack was a champion shot, and in his declining years used to relax on the verandah, shooting rabbits. A newspaper article from 23 January, 1957 reported that he once killed six hares with a single shot. On the other side of the ledger, he managed to shoot himself while dismounting from his bicycle.¹⁰

He was a knowledgeable and witty person with a laid-back attitude. Harold said that Grandad Jack had an inexhaustible supply of often vulgar jokes and could keep a gathering of men entertained

¹⁰Or was it crossing a fence?

for hours. Harold and Jack formed a partnership when Pat returned to the farm with Harold but it didn't survive due to major differences in personality between them.

Jack's parents were Eliza Jane Hammond and Alexander George Threlfall.

3.6.3 George Threlfall, Jack's father

Alexander George Threlfall, 1863–1919, b. Inglewood, Vic d. Longwood, Vic

The following written by Pat Griffiths.

Alexander George, known as George, was the third son of Robert and Catherine Threlfall who migrated from Lancashire in 1854.¹¹

When land was thrown open for selection around Creighton, the whole family with the exception of Robert jnr. moved to the area. Robert senior built a house on Creightons Creek downstream from the railway line. (When he died, his youngest son Tom transported this house to Gippsland, where it still stands.) William, already married, selected land south of the railway, George on the west side downstream of his parents, Cornelius (Neil) the area south of the railway across the creek from William, and Charles who settled beside William. Tom, the youngest, selected around his parents' home.

In his early years George was a keen game hunter which probably gave rise to his interest in trap shooting. In 1895, at the age of 31, he married Eliza Hammond and built his home Ellalea on his original selection. During the twenty four years of his marriage he established a substantial house with vine-covered verandahs on all four sides. It was set in a flourishing gardens with orchards on the north and south side and an extensive vineyard on the east. The whole was enclosed by a row of almonds.

Later he established an orange grove on the north. To water his establishment he designed and built a reticulation scheme far in advance of the times. It supplied water to the house paddock, the cow shed, the shearing shed, and the dog yards, as well as the house and garden. In a short time he built a blacksmith shop, men's hut, stables with a large chaff shed attached and a fruit house which housed the currant racks. During the almond season a fire would be lit in the iron chimney of the shed and the almonds would be shelled at night.

The area between the stables and the cow shed were paved with sawn red gum blocks.

George was a kindly generous man who befriended people in need. Two boys he helped returned to Creighton in their later years to find their benefactor. One was a successful real estate agent and the other had migrated to New Zealand where he had found a position in the public gardens in Napier. (A letter in the local paper testified to his support, often covert, of good causes.)

Fruit trees included the usual apples, figs, pears and plums plus the more exotic persimmons, loquats, mulberries, mandarines, limes and pomegranates. Many cases of fruit were consigned to the Melbourne market. He successfully cultivated peanuts and the asparagus he established flourished for many years.

An 03 July 1942 letter from Pat's second cousin Anne Lewis suggests that George's father Robert migrated to Australia rather than join with his sibling(s) in operating the family brewery in North East England. The brewery was acquired after the sale of spinning mills in Liverpool.

Kathy has recently found two effusive obituaries of George Threlfall on the National Library of Australia's Trove service.^{12 13} The Gazette article reports that he died from the 1919 influenza pandemic. Unmentioned by Pat, her grandfather George operated a sawmill in Creighton.¹⁴

¹¹ Author: There is a high concentration of Threlfalls in Lancashire. Robert and Catherine lived in Ecclestone, then Preston and later Liverpool prior to their emigration. George was born in Inglewood, Vic. where his father and brother Robert jnr. selected land.

¹² *Euroa Advertiser*, 08 August 1919

¹³ *Euroa Gazette*, 08 August 1919

¹⁴ Kathy has documentary evidence of this.



3.7 Tracing maternal ancestors

In 2022, Kathy and I tracked around various towns in the area looking for ancestral connections in Lancashire and the Liverpool area. Our most productive search was in Ecclestone, Lancashire, at the church of St Mary the Virgin. There we found back-to-back gravestones marking the graves of several of her ancestors. There were several other Threlfall or Threlford graves there too.



2022: Kathy in the churchyard of St Mary the Virgin in Ecclestone, Lancashire. The back-to-back pair of gravestones (tall and short) in front of her mark the graves of several of her ancestors.

Chapter 4

Harold Griffiths, Kathy's Father

Harold Griffiths 1920–2005, b. Fairfield, Vic, d. Canberra

Harold grew up in the house his father built at 85 Illawarra Road, Hawthorn, Victoria. He attended Auburn South state school, followed by Gardiner Central School in Malvern, and finally Melbourne Technical College (later named RMIT).¹ With the assistance of an exhibition (free place) and later a senior scholarship he was able to undertake and successfully complete an electrical engineering course, apparently the only one of his peers to do so 'in one go'. For some reason – Harold ascribed it to envy – some of his relatives were strongly opposed to his going to college, accusing him of having pretensions above his station.

In later life he was strongly in favour of supporting everyone who could benefit from it to go on to higher education. "Support them to get educated and they will be able to use their education to support us all in the future."

In his final year thesis he proposed the establishment of an undersea power cable between Victoria and Tasmania. It took about 70 years but his vision was achieved on 01 December 2005, four days before his death, when electricity flowed through Basslink² for the first time.

His first job was as a junior assistant engineer at Yallourn Power Station, where he was subjected to a brutal and frightening induction. He later worked at Leighton Irwin³ Architects and Engineers who specialised in designing hospitals. There he worked on the Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital.

For designing hospitals in 1940 there was no AutoCAD of course, just pencils and pens, slide rules, drafting boards and T-squares. Through standardisation and regular design patterns, Harold and his colleagues were able to design new hospitals at the astonishing rate of a complete floor in a day. I imagine that standardisation also allowed rapid calculation of materials required.

In 1940 he worked on designing the mechanical services system for what was subsequently known as the Royal Canberra Hospital (RCH).⁴ After the disastrous implosion of RCH in 1997,⁵ the contractors excused their use of the wrong type of explosives on the grounds that plans for the building no longer existed. "Should have asked me", growled Harold, "I have a full set."

As a young man, Harold rode a motor bike until he had a very serious accident, hit by a car on the corner of Burwood Rd and Power St near his home. He also told me that he rode his bike through a wall of the garage at Illawarra Road, but for some reason he didn't share that story with Kathy. ☺ In his leisure time, Harold played the drums and surfed at his 'happy place' at Ocean Grove.

During WW2 while still at RMIT he had tried to join the defence forces but was told to finish his course. Later, Leighton Irwin refused him permission to join up, and could do so because Harold was in a reserved occupation. He was also advised to get some experience so he would not be a drain on the community if he was badly injured in the war.

¹It was established in 1887 as the Working Men's College thanks to the philanthropy of Francis Ormond.

²<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basslink> Accessed 19 July 2023.

³<https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/irwin-leighton-major-francis-6804> Accessed 19 July 2023.

⁴https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal_Canberra_Hospital Accessed 19 July 2023.

⁵<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EsPnm43Cjr0> Accessed 19 July 2023.



1939: Harold on his (English) Excelsior motor bike. Photographer unknown.

After Irwin relented he was recruited into the Army in 1941, having applied to the Navy. Eventually, and despite being wrongfully blocked by a superior, he made the appropriate transfer to the Royal Australian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers. (See Section 4.1.) On his return to civilian life in 1946 he resumed his employment at Leighton Irwin and Co before transferring to the Public Works Department, having become frustrated with his lack of advancement. When he told Leighton Irwin that he was leaving, the latter replied, "What's the problem Harold? Aren't we paying you enough? If you stay I'll double your salary." Harold's answer was typical of him, "Too bloody late!"

At the Public Works Department, Harold became responsible for the electrical and mechanical services in all the public buildings in the eastern half of Victoria – all the schools, court houses, hospitals, police stations and schools. When he took over the role, he found huge stacks of files representing works proposals dating back years. Realising that they could never be actioned, he burned everything older than a year!

Contractors hoping to win tenders from Public Works were very keen to keep Harold onside. One of them said to Harold, "I know that you are working on an extension to your house in Blackburn so I've left a truck load of building materials for you on the nature strip." Again, Harold's response was typical, "Well, they bloody well better not be there when I get home!"

Harold had an older brother Ivan Leslie (1917–2006) who was a performer of magic tricks and rather eccentric. Ivan frightened his teacher with a rocket propelled car, and then stunned her by attending class dressed up as a tramp. Ivan lived most of his life in New Zealand and had little contact with his Australian family beyond exchange of Christmas cards.

In 1959 Harold's younger sister Lorna Ruth (1926–1979) married a merchant seaman from Bergen, Norway called Odd Ragnar Berge (1934–1989). Kathy and Lorna loved each other and, when passers-by commented on Lorna's daughter (Kathy), Lorna never corrected them.



Harold's younger sister Lorna Berge (née Griffiths) with her grandfather Arthur Hamblin. Photographer unknown.



The chalet at Ocean Grove. Says Kathy: *Dad used to stay there for free in return for teaching guests to surf. He also played drums at the local cafel/restaurant – I visited there with him after mum died.* Photographer unknown.



Harold on his surfboard at Ocean Grove. The photo suggests that he was quite popular with the young ladies. (I'm told that this photo was taken by a photographer from the Melbourne Age.)

4.1 WWII military service

Harold's (VX104820) service record is available in the National Archives. He also wrote his own account. Here are some highlights of his military career.

1. While a truck driving instructor in the army, he taught a poor student with the unfortunate name of Dick Brain, who was gay, and became an enduring family friend.
2. We still have about 100 pages of duplicated typed notes from the gas training course.
3. Captain Warren Oxley became Harold's best mate. After Pat's death in 1994, Harold felt able⁶ to travel to Sydney to stay with Warren and his daughter and to march on Anzac Day. On one such day a young grandson Jack marched with him, making Harold very proud.
4. He had a fear of snakes and was very alarmed to find that a box he was using as a table inside his tent in [Dutch West] Timor was home to a couple of death adders.
5. He supervised the surrender of the Japanese forces on Timor. They greatly outnumbered his own unit. He found this situation very tense since at any time the Japanese soldiers could easily have overpowered their guards.
6. His former comrades called him 'The King of Timor'.
7. He told me that he returned from the war with grey hair and a yellow streak. He was in very poor health when he returned.

⁶He didn't want to leave Pat at the farm by herself.



1942: Lieut. Adrian Beattie, Sgt. Jack Rutledge, Sgt. Harold Griffiths. Photographer unknown.

I suspect (with no official diagnosis) that he suffered chronic PTSD from his wartime service. He absolutely hated the flypasts of military aircraft and the noise of fireworks displays, and retreated inside with headphones on. He always said that everyone needed a safe kennel to retreat into and resisted having uncovered windows at Creighton. (He said that this was because he didn't want to look out on his work, but I doubt that that was the real reason.)

At the same time, Harold was the bravest person I've met. He was described by former neighbours as the local 'policeman' around Creighton and would single-handedly challenge trespassers and illegal shooters. In an argument, he never shied away from conflict – always working out what was the right thing to do and facing down or tackling opposition no matter how powerful the foe.

He went to court to support his neighbour Reg Halsall in a driving matter and gave character references for other people he thought deserved a chance.

He could be very tough and uncompromising but there was a child-like aspect to his personality. He valued collections of marbles and Matchbox cars and one of the first things he did when he arrived to live with us in Canberra was to buy and install chains of coloured lights. Although non-religious, Christmas was very special to him. He anticipated it long in advance and on the day itself became relaxed and gentle – Except one year when the pump from the dam failed and he disappeared before the Christmas pudding arrived to disassemble and repair the pump.

4.2 Agitating for better roads.

At a community consultation about the Hume Freeway bypass of Euroa, the Country Roads Board (CRB) representative presented plans of each section of the proposed route, one after the other, on a flip board, describing what was proposed and inviting comment and questions. The CRB rep.

seemed relieved that there was no response to one of the sections, but just as he went to flip to the next map, Harold said, “Just one question if I might. How will my neighbour Reg Halsall gain access to his house?” This was a killer question, because the design provided no access!

Harold had earlier unsuccessfully argued against routing the Euroa bypass south of the town, on the grounds that a chemical spill from the bridge over Seven Creeks would flow downstream through the town. Fortunately, that hasn’t happened, yet. Harold favoured the northern option, even though it would be less convenient for the family.

With his engineer training, Harold thought deeply about designing roads for safety, and wasn’t backward in sharing criticisms with the CRB. He said that, “people are endlessly creative in finding new ways to get killed”, and believed that roads should be designed to curb such creativity. He was a very well motivated thorn in the side of the CRB for many years.

One issue that bothered him was the turn-off from the south bound lane of the Hume Highway (before the freeway upgrade) into Creightons Siding Road. He considered it poorly marked and dangerous to cars waiting for a break in the northbound traffic in order to turn right. After unsuccessfully making his case on a number of occasions, he finally persuaded the CRB regional manager to drive southbound down the highway with him so that Harold could point out what the problem was. After driving for a while, the CRB man said, “We must be approaching the turn-off pretty soon.” To which Harold replied, “We passed it a couple of miles back.”

His officer training in the army had taught him the importance of ‘establishing moral authority’ over people he had to deal with. In civilian life that caused a few uncomfortable moments. In his book there always needed to be ‘someone in charge’, and he liked it to be him. Another lesson from the army was to look after your ‘blokes’ first, before yourself. At the end of a working day, he would always feed the dogs and get machinery ready for the next day, before knocking off.

Before I knew him, Harold used to smoke but gave up immediately after his brain operation and never looked back. He said he no longer needed them once the tumor was removed and he didn’t seem to experience any withdrawal problems. When smokers and ex-smokers marvelled at the sudden transformation, and asked whether it was all down to willpower, Harold said that it actually required ‘won’t power’.

He was never a big drinker but occasionally drank a whisky. On one presumably stressful occasion he reached for the whisky bottle, only to discover that John had replaced its contents with cold tea. At an advanced age, when stopped by police at a random breath testing station and asked if he’d been drinking, Harold said, “I had a whisky 47 years ago. Do you think I’ll still be affected?”

4.3 Creighton: A strategic target for enemy bombing?

The Creighton property is at a conjunction of a large number of critical services. The Melbourne-Sydney railway passes between the two blocks of the property as it was when Harold and Pat were alive. The main Melbourne-Sydney telecommunications link, originally coaxial cable, now fibre-optic, passes through it. The main east coast gas main also passes through, and the southern part of the property lost some of its area to the building of the Hume Freeway, another critical Melbourne-Sydney link.

The resumption of land for the freeway reduced Harold and Pat’s ability to move stock across Creightons Creek (the stream, not the district of the same name). Most of the time Creightons Creek flows at less than a megalitre per day, but flows of 1100 megalitres per day⁷ have been observed, eroding large red gums and washing them downstream.

Harold the engineer took over from Harold the farmer and he took action. He bought a railway carriage!

As he explained, a railway carriage is essentially a covered bridge between the bogeys at each end. He built two impressive rock abutments reaching high above the creek and craned the carriage into position across the abutments after stripping out all the internal fixtures, fittings and partitions.

⁷My memory of a government datasheet Harold showed me.

He also added some external bracing to compensate for the loss of partitions but left the roof and side walls intact. To strengthen the floorboards he laid down heavy steel mesh. With the carriage anchored to the abutments with steel cable, he proudly announced that his bridge was more able to cope with floating trees than the multiple culverts under the freeway.

It worked! Sheep could easily be moved through it and it was strong enough and wide enough to allow passage of a car.

4.4 Roles in emergency management and response

It's easily understandable that Harold was very attuned to the dangers of bushfires, given the effects it had on his parents in Gippsland.

He had a tendency to over-react to minor injuries incurred by anyone in his family but was incredibly cool-headed in a crisis. For many years he did a very effective job as inaugural Civil Defence (State Emergency Service) Controller for Euroa. As noted in the previous chapter he and Pat operated a sub-base for the Country Fire Authority from a little cubby hole in the middle of the house. Two walls were covered with maps of the area. One of them he'd compiled and drawn himself – It showed the names and telephone numbers of every rural property owner. As soon as you knew where a fire was you could use the map to phone the property owner and the downwind neighbours.

In the summer I found the farm a very aggravating place to be because of the endless radio chatter, added to the cricket commentary in the kitchen.

After the 1965 Longwood bushfire which ended up burning on a 100km front and killed seven people,⁸ Harold was even more sensitised to fire danger and, each year, prepared vigorously for it. He bought a second-hand State Electricity Commission truck and converted it into a fire truck which, if necessary he could operate single-handedly. It had radiation protection in the cabin and for anyone on the back. It had a spraybar on the front which could wet the ground in front of the truck to avoid tyre damage. The pump could be started from within the cab and a large diameter hose and nozzle was held by a steel ring near the driver's door, enabling a powerful water cannon effect entirely controlled by the driver.



Prior to the carriage bridge, a flood washed away a wooden one, and Harold initially replaced it with a concrete ford. Photo: probably taken by Harold.

⁸When Harold was away fighting that fire, Pat became seriously concerned that he and the men on his truck might have died too.



Harold's creative carriage bridge over Creightons Creek. It was easily possible to drive a car through the bridge – you can see our red Ford Laser emerging after an uneventful crossing. Photos: Harold.



Late 1990: Harold, me and my son Jack with Harold's fire truck in the background. Harold and I had returned from a long day mopping up / blacking out at the Strathbogie fire. Photo: Kathy

On 'bad fire days' the fire truck was fuelled and watered and ready to go. A cool jug full of water was in the cabin and Harold was dressed in protective clothes or had them in the truck. When a fire broke out at Creightons Creek⁹ on a bad fire day in late 1990, Harold beat the official fire trucks to it, but it had already got away and eventually burnt 40,000 hectares and killed a firefighter.



Damage from the 1967 tornado. Photo: Kathy

As if fires weren't enough, on Christmas day in 1967 Creighton was hit by a tornado which did massive damage to fences – in some cases shearing off steel posts. Grandad Les, who had been visiting from South Australia over the holiday period, bought and arranged delivery of a truckload of fencing materials but didn't stay around to oversee the works. Fortunately, the district came out in force and a replacement fence was soon erected.

In 1969, as Euroa Civil Defence Controller, Harold was heavily involved in the response to the Southern Aurora train crash.¹⁰ He told me of the extraordinary efforts of Dr Robert Dunn, who clambered among the wrecked carriages administering medical aid. Nine people died and 117 passengers were injured.

Harold was a councillor for Euroa shire and brought back a number of good stories. He reported that a councillor had angrily shouted at his fellows, "You lot are like a bunch of kids! I'm going home."

Harold was instrumental in the establishment of the Euroa swimming pool in Bury Street in the 1970s. Others wanted it on Seven Creeks, but Harold insisted that it should be away from risk of flooding and falling trees. Harold designed the pool and Pat coloured his plans. At the official opening by the Victorian Premier Rupert Hamer, Harold buttonholed the premier and made the case for extra funds to heat the pool. Hamer agreed to the necessary £80,000 but Euroa council declined the money on the grounds that a heated pool wasn't needed. ... It is heated now.

Harold was extremely active in the community, and highly committed to progress. He designed roads in Yea and Euroa, including modifications to the notorious Anderson St bridge to accommodate

⁹Now known as the Strathbogie Fire: <https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/resources/bushfire-strathbogie/> Accessed 19 July 2023.

¹⁰https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Violet_Town_rail_accident Accessed 19 July 2023.

the standard gauge rail line. He was on the Hospital Committee, and he was instrumental in getting the Currie Park retirement village, comprising 20 self-contained units, off the ground in 1978. It was funded by the rural philanthropist Ian Rollo Currie, who lived at Seven Creeks Estate in Euroa, and whom Kathy liked a lot.

When ill health limited Harold's ability to make things happen he used to complain about being 'the fifth wheel of the coach' and 'a barnacle on the arse of progress'.

Harold seems to have inherited his drive to create, build and improve things from his father Les and grandfather Alfred Griffiths. That gene seems to have passed on to Kathy who possesses the ability to bring incredibly intense focus and determination to bear on any project she takes on.

Harold would have been a strong candidate for an Order of Australia award on the basis of his extensive service to the community – which I've only touched on here. Pat prepared some notes to serve as the basis of such an award, but she died before it could be progressed. I've reproduced her notes in the appendix starting on Page 203.

4.5 Years in Canberra

Once, during Pat's last days, I asked Harold how he was coping. "To tell you the truth mate, I'm bloody crook, but it's not my turn yet."

On the Anzac day following Pat's death, Harold stayed with us in Canberra and we drove him to Sydney to participate in the Anzac Day march. Harold was staying with his best mate Warren Oxley and his family, and Kathy, Jack and I checked into a hotel in Miranda before dropping him off. When we returned to the hotel at around 11pm, we found that our room had been taken over by a teenage party. It seemed that they had found a discarded room key. By the time the manager and security arrived, the party had mysteriously evaporated.

Returning from Sydney we stopped for lunch at a restaurant in Moss Vale, where it became clear that Harold was not well. Once back in Canberra, he developed persistent diarrhoea, and was very weak. When we noticed that his leg had turned a sickly green colour, we called a doctor who diagnosed a deep vein thrombosis (DVT). Admitted to hospital for clot-busting treatment, they started running tests and found four life-threatening conditions: DVT, Salmonella, imminent cancer of the oesophagus, and pre-leukaemia. A specialist physician correctly told him that the leukaemia would kill him in ten years, but the other conditions were cured or managed. It was clear to everyone that living by himself on the farm was not a viable option.

Our house was rather small to accommodate a garrulous Harold and a seven year old. Accordingly, Harold decided that he should buy a transportable house and locate it in our relatively large back yard. He designed the house, and himself built long wooden ramps to both its doors – he vowed to never build a house with steps! His determination shone through as, although improved, his health was not good. He exercised with tins of baked beans, and also forced himself to clean hundreds of second hand bricks for use as pavers.

Getting planning approval for the transportable was as good as a circus. Canberra's older suburbs have many granny flats, but at the time we asked, the ACT planning system did not allow them. We would need to apply for a dual-occupancy permit. That required advertisements in the Canberra Times, large signs on the nature strip, letters to all our neighbours, full documentation and plans, plus colour photographs of the block and its environs. We were called to a meeting at Planning HQ where a man with a stick and a limp told us,

Planner: First, let me congratulate you on an absolutely exemplary submission, perfect in every way.¹¹ We want to use it as a guide to other applicants.

Planner: Second, we're going to knock you back! You don't have enough off-street parking. Yes, I know you have an off-street parking spot approved when you applied to operate a business from home, but dual-occupancy requires that the parking be behind the building line."

¹¹Kathy's doing.

Me: But the building line is 6m from the front boundary. It is behind that.

Planner: Ah no. It has to be behind the line of the buildings.

Me: We inherited an approved set of plans for an extension out the front. Are you saying that if we built that then the parking spot would comply?

Planner: No. We can knock you back because you're now in an area of Territorial Significance. (I drew pencil lines on the plan to show how vehicles could park behind our house.)

Me: Well the parking spots could be here!

(He stumped off down the corridor and returned with a scaled template which he found matched my lines exactly.)

Planner: Yes, but we can still knock you back because the rules say that, for a driveway, you need 4.5m between the house and the side boundary and you only have 4.3m on one side and 4.1m on the other.

(He was referring to the distances between the existing house and the side boundaries, a situation that was already approved and could not be changed without tearing down the house!)

Planner: And there's another problem too. Your site plan shows the new transportable too close to the lane down the side.

Me: But the rules say 3m is required and that's what the plan shows.'

Planner: Ah yes the rules say that, but we don't approve 'em like that.

We briefly contemplated nominating him for a customer-service award.

Eventually the plans were approved, *on the very day when the ACT government brought in a new granny-flat policy with far lower approval hurdles!* ☺



Harold established a close relationship with Dr Val Hill at the Lyneham medical practice, and also with the practice staff. Although constantly 'pinching' pens from reception – he was very proud of the one advertising Viagra – he became great friends with Wendy and her indigenous partner Vic, who had served in Vietnam. Vic had health issues and Harold helped him in dealings with Veterans Affairs. Wendy was a licensed helicopter pilot and offered him a ride. Here he is in the helicopter with Wendy, ready to take off from the Lyneham ovals. Photo: Kathy

Harold sayings

- Last night's storm was incredible – trees blew down that had never blown down before!
- The aim of training is to ensure that a soldier's actions are instinctive and effective.

- Always keep an eye on your rear vision mirror. [For subordinates undermining you.]
- Authority is delegated *upward*. [When a unit is going into battle, they delegate to the unit commander the responsibility for their own lives.]
- It's a long and bitter war. [Said whenever life seemed a battle.]
- He's as useful as pockets in underpants.
- Maintain your aim! (From the army, but Kathy and I both found it a useful motto in our work lives.)
- Never tell a bureaucrat anything!

4.6 Final illness

Unfortunately Harold's last weeks, when leukaemia finally caught up with him, involved quite a bit of suffering despite Kathy's devoted efforts to look after him. Many interactions with the health care system were unsatisfactory.

Unfortunately, Dr Val Hill had retired and, when Harold was too ill to travel to the doctor, her successor at the same clinic declined to make a home visit, since he rode a bicycle. Later, the ambulance crew were grumpy because they incorrectly believed that they had been called out unnecessarily to transport him to hospital. In fact he was immediately admitted and died less than three days later. He had been scheduled to be transferred to palliative care but the transfer was not organised in time.

Despite being affected by morphine, he had a brief period of lucidity and was able to recognise and chat with his grandson Andrew Griffiths, who had travelled from Melbourne. Kathy was upset by the treatment her dad received from certain nurses at Calvary and was horrified to discover that the cause of death listed on his death certificate was sepsis.¹² Leaving the hospital after his death she felt anger and frustration as well as grief.

Kathy loved her dad, and gave a very moving tribute to him at memorial gatherings we organised in Canberra and Longwood. You can read the transcript on Page 206.

4.7 Kathy's ancestors on her father's side

4.7.1 Les Griffiths, Kathy's paternal grandfather

Leslie Findlay Griffiths, 1894–1978, b. Korumburra, Vic. d. South Brisbane, Qld

Grandad Les started as a bricklayer and rose to become a prominent builder. His father Alfred Griffiths (1866 – 1936) was a builder too.¹³ Les was a tough character – he said that building wasn't a game for chickens, and Harold saw him run down a ladder to sack an employee who wasn't doing the right thing. Kathy said that he wanted her and John to call him 'uncle'. She's not sure why but she was offended that other unrelated children also called him uncle. For reasons unknown, Les always wrote to Pat, rather than to Harold.

Les married Ruth Hamblin in 1915.

He went to Darwin during WWII but we're not sure exactly what roles he played during the war. Harold talked of meeting him near Darwin, I think at Adelaide River. We do know that Les played leading roles in the reconstruction of Darwin after the bombing, and in the construction of both the Woomera rocket range and the Maralinga nuclear testing site.

¹²This was presumably caused by a blood transfusion, the second such incident.

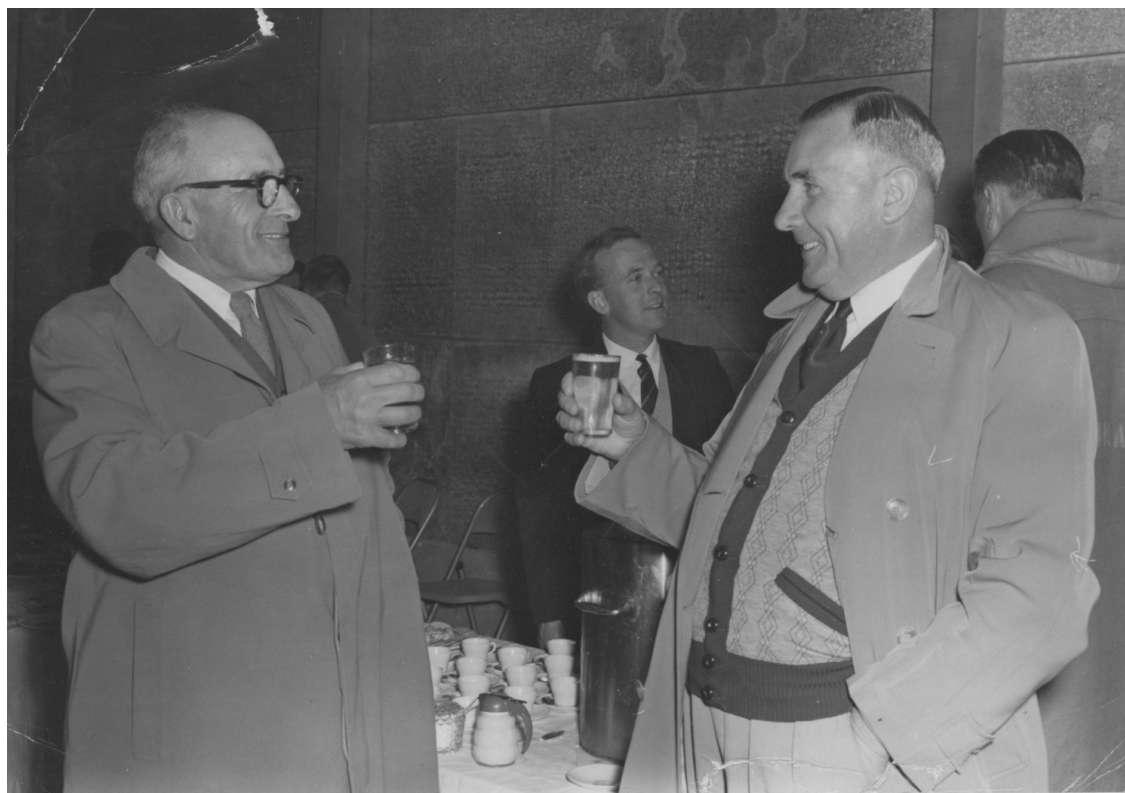
¹³Les's mother was Ellen Sullivan.

A letter from Les to his sister Jean, dated 20 July 1948, shows that he was back in Melbourne, at odds with his wife and daughter, batching with Harold and teaching (presumably) bricklaying or building.

Dear Jean & Famby, There is no doubt about us as letter writers but the poor country relations cannot want anything so. Neither do I, only a few thousand which could be hidden from old Chiff¹⁴ the bloody old cow took a little over £6 per week off me this year. We have had 3 nice frosts here and its still cold, but better than the rain. Ive been digging up the garden and general clean up around the place. Paved out the garage floor with brick bats. I had to make it big enough to take Harolds car as well as my own. Suppose you know that he is engaged to be married sometime next March. A very nice nice steady and well balanced girl ?? school teaching. She comes from Creighton sheep farmers. They are having a hell of a job to find a house and I am not going to be bothered about building one for them as materials are so hard to get. The school is still going strong but I may take a change. Ive been offered a job of Chief Works Supervision at the Rocket Ranges and am thinking very seriously of taking same. It will only last 10 yrs or so to cost £50 million. Get me right away from dam women who cannot be civil. How are the kids not to grow up too soon as they will have to be a nurse & a soldier the way the world looks today. Ruth and Lorna went to New Zealand for 3 mths but they are back again Harold and I batched & had our tea out. As I work 3 nights a week I still have tea out on those nights so I am not home very much. Hope you understand this so called writing, the boys are working away alright so I am having a sit down in the office Hello here comes public nuisance No 1 sits on his xxxx and draws £50 for nothing some people have easy jobs. Well I hope you are all well. I am in the pink in fact never better no effects from the operation and can eat anything now. So long expect to hear from you in the next 10 yrs

Bro. Les.

Grandad Les spent years in the deserts of central Australia and took large numbers of coloured slides. He was also presented with a photo of one of the first atomic tests. It appears on Page 72. According to letters posted from Maralinga Les was still there in 1962.



Exuding self-confidence, Les Griffiths (left) in conversation at the Officers Mess, either at Woomera or at Maralinga. Photographer unknown.

¹⁴Ben Chifley, Australian Prime Minister.



A photo of one of the atomic blasts at Maralinga, taken by one of the British scientists and presented by him to Grandad Les. The scientist also gave Les a cap which he gave to Kathy. She sometimes wore it at university, and so did I.

In 1963 he was compulsorily retired and moved to Adelaide. While there he supervised a number of major construction projects including the Dental Hospital and early buildings at Flinders University. He initially lived in the Gresham Hotel but then moved in with a couple called Bernie and Joan. After Bernie and Ruth died, and at the age of 80, Les married Joan¹⁵. He finally retired at age 82 and they moved to Brisbane.

The house at 85 Illawarra Rd., Hawthorn

Les Griffiths built the house at 85 Illawarra Road, Hawthorn, and Ruth's father Arthur Hamblin made all the cabinetry. After Les's departure for the desert he sold the Illawarra Rd house to Harold, and Ruth lived there until she became crippled with rheumatoid arthritis. Harold then paid for and arranged for a room for her to be added to Lorna's house. Kathy's brother John and his then partner Vicky Brack^a lived at Illawarra Rd along with some tenants. Eventually, Harold sold the house to John for below market value and had to pay gift duty on the difference. ☺

^aDaughter of famous artist couple John Brack and Helen Maudsley.

¹⁵Joan Elizabeth Foster

Les said that if he went to the top of an existing ten-storey building he'd be very uncomfortable with the height, but had no problem with the same height on a building he'd worked on as it rose floor by floor.

He also said that he hated cities and far preferred being out in the bush. Perhaps that partly reflects his childhood in the beautiful, very hilly, forested areas of Wonga, Gippsland.

4.7.2 Griffiths family in Gippsland

A history sent around by Peter Street on the death of his mother Janet Euphemia Street, Les's younger sister, goes as follows:

The Griffiths family received a land grant of property 5 miles out of Foster, Vic., which they called *Pately Hill*, and later acquired another farm as well, 3 miles away which was called *Fern Dell* in 1896 at Wonga; both being dairy farms. (The owner of Fern Dell in 1991 was a Mr T. Purvis.)

Pately Hill was further out into the bush, the house on it was 500 yards or so off the road, on a steep hill. Flour and food came overland across the mountains by pack horse from the port at Toora, these purchases were made annually from Foy & Gibson.

The Franklin River was way down in the bottom of the valley below the house; Above the house at Fern Dell, Corner Inlet can be seen in the distance. The children rode horses 1 mile to school at Wonga, which was further on from Fern Dell. . .

After the 1914-18 war ended, the Griffiths family went to live at *Kinnordy*, 67 Jordan St, Malvern, Melbourne in 1918.

Les's father Alfred Griffiths was very active in the community and took a position on the South Gippsland council in 1917 when the incumbent went off to war. Les's middle name of Findlay comes from his grandmother Janet Greig Findlay. Three of Les's brothers also fought in WWI: Alfred Henry¹⁶ was mortally wounded at Lone Pine in 1915 and was buried at sea from a hospital ship between Gallipoli and Alexandria; Talbot (Tal) was wounded twice and Jack was also wounded. Les had been declared medically unfit due to missing toes, courtesy of an axe-wielding brother!

I think Alfred worked as a builder on his return to Melbourne. He had an enormous hand span and was able to pick up an astonishing number of bricks. Harold was amazed that Alfred was able to lay 1200 bricks in a day.¹⁷

Kathy is named after Kathleen Lilian Barcham (born Griffiths, 1906–1990), Les's youngest sister. Auntie Kath always said she was a Sullivan (after her mother) not a Griffiths! She was meticulously clean and tidy (OCD?) and made Kathy strip down to her petticoat before sitting on the furniture. Her husband Harry was a TPI pensioner from his WWI service and he spent a large amount of time in his shed. Beginning in 1958, Auntie Kath worked for a remarkable 24 years in the Classifieds department at the Age newspaper, retiring at the age of 76. She nursed Harry through long periods of ill health, until his death in 1971.¹⁸

4.7.3 Ruth Griffiths née Hamblin, Kathy's paternal grandmother

Olive Ruth Hamblin 1890–1975, b. Kyneton, Vic, d. Surrey Hills, Vic.

Ruth grew up near Wonga, near Foster in Gippsland, just across the road from the Griffithses. She was the daughter of Arthur Hamblin and Catherine Mary Harris and is famous for a heroic horse ride as a child during a major bushfire.

There is a lot of fascinating information about the Hamblins and the Griffithses at Wonga in Dorothy Williams's book, *The settlement of Wonga: First 50 years*.¹⁹

¹⁶<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/R1633837> Accessed 19 July 2023.

¹⁷A web search yields various estimates of modern bricklaying rates. One example says 300–500 per day. (<https://pathwaytoaus.com/faq/how-many-bricks-can-a-bricklayer-lay-in-a-day/> Accessed 19 July 2023.

¹⁸Kathy has an obituary for Auntie Kath, written by her mother Pat.

¹⁹<https://promcountryhistory.org.au/he-settlement-of-wonga-first-50-years-dorothy-williams/> Accessed 19 July 2023.



1906 fires near Foster in Gippsland. Photo: Weekly Times, Saturday, 03 February 1906.²⁰ Original caption: Sufferers arriving at Mrs Arthur Hamblin's house. Harold believed that the girl was his mother. Kathy says that Ruth was very short, but can the girl in the image really be 15 years old?



A postcard from near Ruth's home. According to the Habitat Advocate,²¹ "the hollow Wonga Stump near Yarram was used as a church and a school until it was destroyed by fire in 1898." I really wanted to find out whether Ruth attended the school, but I confess I'm stumped.

²⁰<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/225184637> Accessed 19 July 2023.

²¹<https://www.habitatadvocate.com.au/tag/the-bulga-stump/> Accessed 19 July 2023. This article claims that the mountain ash trees in Gippsland were possibly the largest living things on earth.

The list of bushfires maintained by Forest Fire Management Victoria²² shows that the area had experienced another disastrous fire on Red Tuesday, 1898: "On 1 February, fires burned 260,000 hectares in South Gippsland. As a result, 12 people were killed and over 2,000 buildings were destroyed."

A contemporaneous account of the heroic ride by Kathy's grandmother Ruth appeared in the Melbourne Argus of Friday 26 January 1906. It also records the dire effects of the fire on the neighbouring Griffithses.²³ It was copied or paraphrased in newspapers across the country. I have reproduced it in part below.

THE BUSH FIRES.

SOUTH GIPPSLAND.

SERIOUS POSITION AT FOSTER.

FIGHTING THE FLAMES.

THRILLING INCIDENTS.

FOSTER Thursday.—More complete knowledge of the results of the terrible fire that raged on Tuesday are now being made known. Additional evidence has been obtained from several leading residents of Foster, who at the risk of their own lives, made their way through the flames to help their fellow settlers. When they realised the danger that was threatening, they promptly volunteered assistance, well knowing from their experience of 1898 what delay means.

Mr Lamb, of Hill and Co., who was in the thickest of the fight, tells his own tale as follows:—

I left Foster on Tuesday at 4 p.m., accompanying Mr. Hamblin's daughter Ruth, who came in on business in the morning. Two miles distant from the township we were met by a sheet of flame, the whole country on either side of the road being like a furnace. To retreat was as dangerous as to advance, so we set our horses at full gallop along the tortuous Bollarah road. The girl displayed the utmost coolness and pluck. Hamblin's place was reached after a thrilling ride, trees falling in front and behind us. The fire had not touched the homestead of the Hamblin family up to then, so, leaving Ruth at her home, I made my way along the road to Square Top, the residence of Councillor Clemson, president of the shire, which was by this time in ruins. All the outbuildings were demolished and the horses and fowls roasted alive within 10 yards of an iron tank in which Clemson and his wife and family had taken refuge. The scene at this juncture was awful in the extreme. The flames were leaping from hilltop to hilltop and the deafening roar of the flames, the falling of huge blackbutt timber, and the blinding smoke, together with the sufferings of animals and human beings, making an appalling spectacle. The occupants of the tank were totally blind. I supplied an eye lotion and clothing, and administered stimulants, afterwards proceeding to Griffiths's place, half a mile to the eastward, which was also surrounded by flames. All the outbuildings were burnt to the ground, but the house was still standing, and the inmates were found in a potato field. I provided them with food and stimulants, and, after a ride of four hours, returned to Foster.

Ruth was a talented keyboard player and played cinema organ to accompany the silent films of the era. During the Great Depression, when Harold was only about 10, she established a cleaning company and ran it successfully.

²²<https://www.ffm.vic.gov.au/history-and-incidents/past-bushfires> Accessed 19 July 2023.

²³<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/10017037> Accessed 19 July 2023.



Left: Ruth Griffiths née Hamblin, looking elegant and formidable. Right: Arthur Hamblin at Harold and Pat's wedding, November 1948. Photographers unknown.

4.7.4 Arthur Hamblin, Ruth's father

Arthur Hamblin 1867–1954, b. Kyneton, Vic. d. Brunswick, Vic.

Arthur Hamblin and his brother Henry (Harry) joined their father in the piano business in Kyneton around about 1887. The business became known as Joseph Hamblin and Sons. Later the brothers took over the business as Hamblin Brothers. According to the Kyneton Observer of Thursday 17 Nov 1887 they were both proficient piano makers.²⁴

KYNETON EXHIBITORS AT THE GEELONG JUVENILE EXHIBITION.—At this exhibition, which will be opened on Tuesday next, two exhibits occupying prominent positions are the separate handiwork of two young Kyneton natives—Mr Harry Hamblin and Mr Arthur Hamblin, sons of Mr Joseph Hamblin, pianoforte manufacturer, of High Street. Mr Harry Hamblin manufactured one instrument, and his brother, the other, without any assistance. Their pianos are of the class known as upright grand, full trichord, in walnut cases. The panels are engraved and picked out with gold lines. The frames are iron. The instruments have celeste soft pedal, and are replete with every modern improvement. Other pianos of precisely the same class, and manufactured by Messrs Harry and Arthur Hamblin, are on exhibition at their establishment at High Street. The young manufacturers have given abundant proof of their aptitude for their business, and are to be complimented and congratulated upon the success they have achieved.

A follow up article from Thursday 12 April 1888 recorded that their exhibit had received a silver medal, and further accolades:²⁵

SUCCESSFUL EXHIBITORS AT THE GEELONG EXHIBITION.—Some time ago we mentioned that Mr Harry Hamblin and Mr Arthur Hamblin, sons of Mr Joseph Hamblin, of High Street, and now associated with him in business, had sent a piano of their own manufacture to

²⁴<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/240859701> Accessed 19 July 2023.

²⁵<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/240861480> Accessed 19 July 2023.

the Geelong Juvenile Exhibition. We now have to congratulate the young manufacturers upon the success they have achieved, their exhibit having been awarded a silver medal. A similar piano manufactured by the same young gentlemen was used at the recent concert in connection with the Kyneton Cricket Club, and the talented lady who manipulated it spoke in unqualified praise of its excellence, and the singers expressed themselves as no less pleased.

Harry and Arthur wound up the piano business in about 1892, and both moved to Wonga. Conditions were very harsh in South Gippsland in that era and, like their Griffiths neighbours, Arthur and family later moved again to Melbourne where Arthur worked as a cabinet maker. We have a fine example of a glass fronted dresser/book case made by him.

According to Births, Deaths and Marriages, Victoria, Arthur married "Cath Mary Harris" in 1889. She was born in Kyneton in June 1862 and her death notice in 1954²⁶ suggests she was known as Mary. Arthur died in the same year.²⁷

Mary's father James Harris was a miner born in Falmouth, Cornwall and her mother Ann Kerr was from the tiny island of Taransay in the Outer Hebrides.²⁸ Coincidentally we had already booked a trip to the Outer Hebrides when Kathy discovered this, and we soon added to our plans a day trip to Taransay.



2022: Kathy standing in the ruins of what might have been Ann Kerr's house in [new] Raa on Taransay – a one in four chance because I believe there were only four houses there.

Lovely weather prevailed for our excursion to Taransay. Our boat departed from Horgabost beach, where many people were swimming. Like the amazing Luskentyre beach nearby, Horgabost features huge expanses of golden sand. Very beautiful but afflicted by clouds of midges, particularly in the camping and picnic area behind the beach.

Taransay has been uninhabited since 1974 but we were told that during the COVID pandemic, someone had started remote working, with the emphasis on remote, from a house in the former village of Paible.

²⁶The Age, Tue 26 Jan 1954. <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/206084751> Accessed 19 July 2023.

²⁷The Age, Fri 17 Dec 1954. <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/205728067?searchTerm=arthur%20hamblin> Accessed 19 July 2023.

²⁸<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taransay> Accessed 19 July 2023.

Kathy was quite excited to walk around the island and visit the sites of old and new Raa where her ancestors had lived, and to climb the 267m high Ben Raah behind the villages. There were no paths outside the Paible area where our boat landed. Walking was hard work, involving clambering over rocks, pushing through vegetation and picking routes through small streams and bogs. But the atmosphere and the views were magnificent.

Ann Kerr's family were victims of the notorious *Highland Clearances*²⁹ in which landlords evicted tenants who'd lived on their land for generations. They were first moved to a new location (new Raa) on Taransay and then to an area known as Borge on the island of Harris. Finally, in about 1851, they emigrated to Australia.



Piano maker Joseph Hamblin c. 1895. *Photo indirectly courtesy of Jill Roy.*

4.7.5 Joseph Hamblin, Ruth's grandfather

Joseph Hamblin 1820–1899. b. Speenhamland, West Berkshire, d. Kyneton, Vic.

In England, Joseph grew up in the vicinity of Newbury in Berkshire. Speen, Speenhamland, and Donnington, mentioned in relevant baptisms, deaths and marriages, are all districts within the

²⁹https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Highland_Clearances Accessed 19 July 2023.

larger Newbury area. Greenham Common, famous for the Women's Peace Camp and two decades of protests against nuclear cruise missiles, is close by.

Joseph worked for John Broadwood & Sons, piano makers, in London and completed a commission for Queen Victoria. In 1842, he migrated to Perth, WA, and worked for George Lazenby. He built furniture for prominent public buildings in WA, before moving to Kyneton, Victoria in the 1850s and establishing himself as a piano maker.³⁰ There is a very informative article on Joseph Hamblin online.³¹ It includes photos of Hamblin and his work. Joseph eventually brought his sons Harry and Arthur (Ruth's father) into the piano making business.

From an entry in the Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians:³²

HAMBLYN (HAMBLIN), Joseph, b. 1814, arr. 12.1842 per Trusty with wife Rebecca COMLEY b. 1822. Chd. Joseph Thomas b. 1843, William b. 1850. She dep. 4.1845 per Victoria for SA (&? England), he went to England per Despatch 1.1847. Returned 13.12.1848 per Ameer with wife, 2 chd. & sister Ellen. Perth, carpenter, joiner, cabinet maker, undertaker, piano tuner & teacher of singing & violin. Employed a T/L man 1851. Wife & child dep. 1850 per Captain Cook for SA. He followed soon after & they stayed there for 2 yrs before moving to Vic.

The passenger list for Trusty,³³ arriving in Bunbury, WA in December 1842, confirms the Hamblins were on board. Ameer arrived in Fremantle in Feb 1849 but no passenger list has been found.

Jill Roy is also a descendant of Joseph Hamblin. Her monograph *Those Hamblins*³⁴ provides a lot of history of the family and disputes some of the information in the dictionary. She says that Joseph was born in 1820 rather than 1814 and returned to Australia on the *Ranee* rather than the *Ameer*. She documents a family belief that Joseph had made a chair for the Queen of Spain.

From the Perth Inquirer of Wednesday 19 Feb, 1845:³⁵

GEORGE LAZENBY hereby notifies his intention to leave the colony for a short time, on a visit to England, by the Halifax Packet.

N.B. — G. L. takes this opportunity of returning thanks to his friends and the public for the liberal patronage he has received during a residence among them of upwards of 12 years, and begs to state that he has engaged Mr. Joseph Hamblin to conduct the business for him during his absence; by a reference to whom all orders will be punctually attended to. Pianos repaired and tuned by J. H. as usual.

According to Jill Roy, Joseph's first wife Rebecca returned to England in 1845 on the same boats as George Lazenby. Joseph followed in 1847 with the whole family returning to WA in 1848. As Jill says, these travels raise many questions.

Rebecca died in 1860 and Joseph married Sarah Britcher in 1861. Sarah gave birth to Kathy's great-grandfather Arthur in 1867.

From the Kyneton Observer, Sat 11 Nov 1871:³⁶

³⁰<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-11-25/joseph-hamblin-piano-restored-bendigo/10549246> Accessed 19 July 2023. This report speculates that there are only three surviving Hamblin pianos, but Kathy remembers that Lorna owned one which sat in her living room. It is probably in the possession of her cousin Lindsay. On 12 June 2022, Kathy and I saw another one in Kyneton Museum.

³¹<https://dorothyerickson.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/6.4-Hamblin.pdf> Accessed 19 July 2023.

³²Erickson, Rica. (Ed.) The Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians pre 1829 – 1888, vol. 2 D–J. UWA Press. <https://www.friendsofbattleylibrary.org.au/bicentennial-dictionary> Accessed 19 July 2023.

³³<https://www.harveyhistoryonline.com/?p=225> Accessed 19 July 2023.

³⁴Roy, Jill. *Those Hamblins – The story of a Hamblin family in Australia and its origins in England*. 2022 Edition. Earlier edition: <https://catalogue.sag.org.au/resbyfield.jsp?term=Roy%2C+Jill&field=author> Accessed 19 July 2023.

³⁵<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/65583786> Accessed 19 July 2023.

³⁶<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/240910515> Accessed 19 July 2023.

LOCAL INDUSTRIES. In giving a hasty sketch of our local industries the other day, we omitted a most important one, viz., Mr Joseph Hamblin's pianoforte manufactory. Pianos are made, tuned, and repaired at his establishment. The black wood of Kyneton (Mr Hamblin says), is as good for rest planks as English oak. What is known as Van Diemen's Land musk wood, or colonial walnut, is used for veneering the piano cases. Lately some of this musk or walnut has been found in the Dandenong Ranges, between Melbourne and Gippsland, and, it is said, is equal in every respect to the Tasmanian wood. The black wood, of Tasmania is also good for veneering. It is very handsome and takes a magnificent polish. The woods used by Mr Hamblin are kept in his factory from 4 to 10 years, in order that they may be thoroughly seasoned before being worked up. The atmosphere of the room in which the wood is kept is always maintained at summer heat by means of a furnace. The ivory keys, wire, rest pins, and all the small work are imported. As one would naturally suppose, Mr Hamblin says pianos can be and are made in this country so as to resist the effects of the climate much better than those imported from home, and for the simple reason that the wood is tempered in the climate where the instrument is used, before being worked up. In England, it is almost impossible to season wood so that it will stand a sea voyage and then endure the climate of this colony. But in spite of this, and the extra cost of the English and French instruments, there is a strong prejudice in favor of the imported articles.

Mr Hamblin can make good pianos of seven octaves, with patent metal bridges from £30 to £65.

The *Biographical register of Australian colonial musical personnel* by Graeme Skinner (University of Sydney)³⁷ contains a large amount of information about Joseph Hamblin and three of his sons. It includes the following photograph of the Hamblin shop in Kyneton.



Skinner's caption: Hamblin's, High Street, Kyneton, c.1880s (image courtesy of Kyneton Museum, VIC.)

³⁷<https://www.sydney.edu.au/paradisec/australharmony/register-H-1.php> Accessed 19 July 2023.



The Joseph Hamblin piano held by the Kyneton Museum. Photo taken by Kathy 12 June, 2022

Chapter 5

University studies

Harold and Pat drove Kathy to Canberra for ANU Orientation Week in 1972. She had gained Early Entrance based on her high school ratings rather than needing to wait for the results of her final year 12 exams. The family were welcomed to Canberra by Professor John Mulvaney, a friend of Pat's through his wife Jean and their mutual friend Joan Trewern. John Mulvaney was an eminent prehistorian and a leading figure in the campaign to establish the National Museum of Australia.

Kathy had chosen Garran Hall as her place of residence. John Mulvaney said that Bruce Hall had a better reputation and that bright students tended to go there. He offered to see if he could get Kathy a place there but, fortunately for me, she declined.

Kathy and I met soon after her arrival at Garran. Gordon Lister was a sub-warden and organised a whole lot of activities involving freshers. One of them was an evening run around the campus. I joined in and Kathy caught my attention as the only female able to keep up with the males. Gordon also used to take groups of people rock-climbing at Booroomba Rocks, but Kathy refused absolutely to be involved in such activity.

Kathy arrived at ANU with an unjustifiably unflattering assessment of her own capabilities. She felt that she knew nothing and wasn't as bright as others in the class. However, in various first year assessments which she was convinced she had failed, she gained High Distinctions and sometimes topped the class. In Zoology, she was one of three students asked to give a presentation, along with a male who knew he knew everything and wanted to share the knowledge of his knowledge with everyone. To his undoubted chagrin, Kathy's presentation was judged the best, and the tutor said that she ought to do Honours in the subject.

Because of her conviction that she was starting way behind her classmates, Kathy set out to work incredibly hard. However, as she complained in a letter to her parents, the social life in Garran rather mitigated against it. On one evening she said that she had only just managed to get rid of a series of visitors at eleven pm, at which time I arrived and stayed until midnight. At last she could start working.

Kathy continued to play netball at university. She played A-grade for ANU and represented ANU in intervarsity competitions held in Perth. She was in line for selection in the Australian varsity team to play in New Zealand but made herself unavailable due to pressure of academic work.

She played wing defence or goal defence. One of her fellow team members was a lively blonde woman called Judy Boreham, who also studied Psychology and became a good friend. Judy later travelled overland from London to Australia with her brother, and returned with horrific stories of intestinal parasites, Pakistani hospitals, street mobs and burnt out cars.

I'm not sure how relevant it was to netball but Kathy perfected the art of delivering a hip bump. With her perfect timing she was able to send flying someone larger and heavier than herself ... e.g. me.

Consistent with netball's rigid, pedantic rules and whistle-loving officials,¹ women netballers in those innocent days were required to lift their dress up to have their underwear inspected before each game, allegedly to ensure adherence to the colour code. Imagine that in the days of mixed netball!

¹I much prefer Ultimate which is self-refereed.

It's a source of great regret to me that I never took the opportunity to go and watch Kathy play – not, I hasten to assure you, that I wanted to look at her underwear. Well, I did, but not in the context of netball umpiring. ☺

One of Kathy's next-door neighbours was Pam Rickard, a lovely person who eventually gave in to Gordon Lister's relentless pursuit and married him. Pam was a great friend to both of us for 40 years before she tragically fell victim to early onset dementia.

Another Garran Hall neighbour was Maria Poulis. Fifty years later she is still one of Kathy's closest friends. Maria's parents were Greek and they became very worried about potential moral contagion when Kathy and I started living together. They visited our group house in Yarralumla and Mrs Poulis asked Kathy to come out to the car. There, Mr Poulis delivered a lecture. Much later when Maria gave in to parental pressure and married her boyfriend Steve Harding, she asked unmarried Kathy to write the vows and be the witness. The wedding was held on Springbank Island in Lake Burley Griffin on a day when Canberra was surrounded by bushfires. Bride and groom arrived in kayaks!

So delighted was he that family honour had been preserved, Mr Poulis ignored these unconventional arrangements and performed Zorba's dance with great gusto.

While still in Garran Hall, Maria, Kathy and I decided to attend a Joan Baez concert in Sydney. We were going to take Maria's parents' car but as we went to depart, we found it had been vandalised in the Forestry carpark – windows smashed, radio stolen and seats slashed. We left it and travelled in my rather older EK Holden. After the evening concert we drove back to Canberra on the goat tracks called the Hume and Federal highways. In those days those roads were very narrow, and there were many speed-restricted corners, including two with 5mph² speed limits!

Brian Cheetham was another close friend of Kathy's. They used to engage in lengthy, very intense intellectual conversations, usually sitting on the floor, with Brian constantly fidgeting and changing position. Brian was a very bright student from the Western Australian wheat belt. His main interest was in biochemistry and he was able to explain biochemical mechanisms more clearly than anyone else I've come across. Brian spent a year working for Australian Volunteers Abroad in Malaysia. His final payment from Malaysia came in the form of a cheque with a very short validity period. By the time the cheque made it through the machinery of Malaysian government and travelled by ship to Australia it had expired. The story was repeated with its replacement!

Kathy seemed to like sitting on the floor and showed me that she could stand up using only one leg (other leg and arms off the floor). That seemed impossible to me but I eventually managed to do it too. These days it not only seems impossible, but it actually is.

Kathy's friendship with Sally Rigden has continued from Garran Hall to the present day, despite a tragedy and Sally living overseas. Both Sally and her husband-to-be, Robert Hill, were geology students, and living in a group house in Macquarie until Robert left to do a PhD at CalTech in Pasadena, CA. Sally stayed with us in Downer for a while before deciding that she would follow Robert to California, despite not having finished her ANU masters degree. Sally ended up doing an award winning CalTech PhD too, but again Robert left her behind to take up a postdoc in Cambridge, UK. Again, Sally followed Robert to England, but did manage to complete her PhD.

Eventually, Sally and Robert returned to ANU where both had positions in the Research School of Earth Sciences. They were living in Latham with two lovely daughters, Ashley and Carolyn Hill, when tragedy struck. Returning from a Saturday morning shopping expedition with her daughters, Sally found Robert on the floor, dead from a heart attack.

Kathy provided support to Sally and the girls, and we used to take Ashley to Turner Primary School with Jack. Kathy formed a very close bond with both Ashley and Carolyn which endures to the present.

Later, Sally married Jim Lee, a Canadian of Chinese descent who was spending time at the Research School of Earth Sciences. Ashley and Carolyn landed on their feet, having such a kind and sensible step-dad. The family moved to Kingston Ontario, and lived there for quite a few years until the girls graduated from University and moved back to Australia. To our surprise, diminutive

²8km/hr

Carolyn became an officer in the Canadian naval reserve.

For a while, the whole family lived in Sydney, before Jim and Sally moved to Saskatoon. Fortunately, Jim is a Plutonium frequent flyer and has managed to come to Australia many times with Sally. They've stayed with us for many enjoyable visits both in Turner and at Creighton II.

5.1 13 MacDonnell St, Yarralumla

Pam Rickard was two years ahead of Kathy and graduated from her Bachelor of Asian Studies at the end of 1972. She enrolled in a Graduate Diploma of Secretarial Studies at what was then called the College of Knowledge (Canberra College of Advanced Education). She had to move out of Garran Hall and rented a flat in the suburb of Hackett, waitressing in the evenings to cover her expenses. She used to hitch-hike late at night back to Hackett. Many of the men who gave her lifts told her that she was lucky they were one of the few who wouldn't do her harm.

Both the character of Pam's landlord and the hitch-hiking caused Gordon enormous anguish. He couldn't persuade Pam to marry or 'shack up with' him, so he devised a scheme to solve both problems by forming a group house. Mrs Byrne, a relative of some sort, owned a rental house at 13 MacDonnell St, Yarralumla and, in the middle of 1973, the tenants were moving out.

Gordon persuaded Pam, Kathy and me to join him to take up the tenancy. The four of us had a great time. It was an era when we felt safe leaving the doors unlocked at night. Pam's room was always an untidy mess, but whenever she needed to go out for lectures or work, she would emerge a picture of impeccable elegance, like a phoenix from the ashes. In sharp contrast, Gordon would spend long nocturnal periods at the ANU Computer Centre, sleep in until the afternoon, and often play the bagpipes in the back yard, wrapped in a towel in lieu of a kilt. On one occasion a crowd of children from the neighbourhood flooded in to hear the music.

We recorded household expenses and contributions in a small ledger, and we all took turns at cooking. Pam was by far the most competent cook and taught me useful culinary tips, but we had to forgive Gordon for putting pepper in the porridge. The house had a wonderful atmosphere apart from the occasional, "Rack off Lister!" from Pam.

Kathy and I became closer and closer over the early months at MacDonnell St. Gordon came home one evening and found us cuddling while the rhubarb on the stove boiled dry. Soon after, I moved into her room, which had a double bed. Kathy's parents were totally unfazed by our relationship, but knowing exactly what my parents' reaction would be, I avoided telling them.

I still hadn't told them when they decided to come to Canberra for a visit. When we entertained them for an excruciating afternoon in the lounge room at MacDonnell Street, my silly stepmother Dorn played the game of, "Where does Gordon sleep?", "Where does Pam sleep?", "Where does Kathy sleep?", ... It didn't end well.

Parental friction resulting from our relationship continued for years. Dorn treated Kathy so badly I'm not surprised³ that she told her mother in a letter, "I'm never visiting Beechworth again." However, she tolerated the treatment so I could retain a relationship with my father. After my sister Michele married and built a house, we stayed at Michele's each time we visited Beechworth. After my father died in 1989 we avoided Dorn altogether and met my sisters and their families for Christmas in Tumut, Wagga Wagga, Benalla, Thredbo, and Euroa. Eventually this tradition morphed into the now traditional *Christmas in Euroa* which over more than a quarter of a century has never seen a cross word exchanged. That's rather different to the high-stress Christmas lunches organised by Dorn.

The halcyon days of the original MacDonnell St gang of four ended with Pam's departure early in 1974. Ann Burton took over Pam's room and we took on a fifth resident, Claire Mulvaney, daughter of John and Jean. Over time, the composition of the household changed and John Dravnieks and Dave Seddon spent brief periods with us. It was never remotely like *He died with a felfafel in his hand*⁴ but the special feeling we had as 'founders' rather dissipated.

³Most of Dad's friends and relatives were treated equally badly, eventually driven away.

⁴John Birmingham's 1994 account of a dystopian group house.

Throughout her adult life Kathy has battled bouts of depression. I first encountered one at MacDonnell St. I had no understanding whatever of depression, and feared that I might be a cause. Apart from trying to entice her out of it using treats of one sort or another, and using 'logic' to argue that there was no reason to be unhappy, I had no idea what to do. So I took a photo.☺



Kathy dressed up to attend brother John's wedding to the delightful Vicky Brack. Photo: Harold Griffiths

At the end of third year, Kathy and our friend Moir Mahony found casual employment at a high commission in Canberra. Kathy was asked to work in their library. She found that their tens of thousands of volumes had been catalogued in accession order – the first book they acquired was given the number one, the second number two and so on. Kathy amazed them by re-organising them according to the Dewey Decimal system. This greatly assisted the Press Attache in his frequent requests for volumes of erotic art.

When the Press Attache was thirsty, he came out and said, “I like my tea hot!” When he had visitors he would call Moir in and introduce her, “This is Moir. She has a Science degree. She makes the tea.”

Another officer was responsible for the toilet paper. If you wished to use the toilet you had to ask him to issue some sheets from his supply. Consistent with this frugality was the process of ordering stationery. Once, the High Commission ordered half a dozen biros from a local stationer, but a full dozen were supplied. In consternation the High Commission rang the supplier and asked them to come and collect the surplus pens. They were reluctant to do so. Eventually a compromise was reached – the High Commission would secure the extra pens in their safe and pay for them the following month.

When Kathy turned 21, she insisted that I organise an ice-cream cake in the form of a ship. During her childhood she’d been envious of boys having cakes in the shape of interesting things like ships and cars rather than the insipid ones provided to girls. Time for her to have her way. I ordered one, and collected it from the factory in Fyshwick, packed in dry ice.

Kathy had refused any suggestion of a large party and four of us gathered in the sunken lounge room at Maria Poulis’s parents’ house in Forrest. Kathy, Maria, Judy Boreham and I sat on the floor around a table with the ice-cream ship in pride of place. We ate a slice each and a couple of hours later we all woke up! The only explanation we can think of is that the dry ice sublimed to carbon dioxide and resulting low oxygen levels put us all to sleep. What a party!!

At some stage during 1974, Mrs Byrne told us that she wanted to sell the Yarralumla house to take advantage of booming house prices at the time – she sold it for just under \$30,000 and made a huge profit. Pam had already headed off to Hamamatsu, Japan for a year as a teacher of English and Gordon had finally ‘finished’ his PhD thesis – He left me to collect the 22 copies of 541 single-sided pages from the printers, to organise a working bee to collate the pages and the various A4 photos, to take the copies to the binders in Fyshwick, and to submit the final volumes. I must have done a good job as Gordon was awarded the Crawford Prize for best ANU thesis that year.

Gordon was in a desperate rush to meet a deadline for taking up a lectureship at the University of Leiden in the Netherlands, but he travelled via Hamamatsu to visit Pam. Riding the Shinkansen bullet train from Tokyo, and totally ignorant of Japanese language and writing, he overshot his destination and had to take a hugely expensive taxi ride back to Hamamatsu.

Kathy and I started looking for accommodation in a very difficult rental market. We ended up in a garden flat in O’Connor.

5.2 24 Hovea St, O’Connor

The main house at 24 Hovea St was architecturally grand – on a very small scale – with a dramatic butterfly roof and a wood-panelled bar in the lounge room. On the downside, its sewer pipes sometimes blocked and their contents bubbled out down the slope toward our garden flat.

We met the tenant of the main house on the day Gough Whitlam was sacked. Graeme Tonzing had moved to Canberra to take up a job at CSIRO’s Division of Computing Research. Graeme’s pregnant wife Jennie had stayed in Geelong to give birth and came to Canberra a few months later.

We were soon drafted in as baby sitters for baby Sarah Tonzing, which was definitely not a hard-ship post. Jennie would put Sarah to sleep after cooking us a three-course roast dinner and putting it in her warming trolley. We would go over, eat a delicious meal and read books, while occasionally checking on the always slumbering infant.

Graeme and Jennie eventually moved back to the Geelong area but we are still close friends, after

almost 50 years.

The very elderly owner of the Hovea St property sometimes came into our flat to paint the window frames, without asking or telling us. If she'd asked we would have placed higher maintenance priority on the mildew on our bedroom wall, the gaps in the bathroom wall through which the slugs and snails entered, and the plausible possibility of electrocution in the shower, but I suppose bright white window frames (and parts of the adjacent carpet) have some value. We couldn't have a shower on a frosty morning because the pipes froze. Furthermore, the tiny stove plugged into a normal 10 Amp socket, meaning that we were unable to use many of the possible combinations of hot plates, griller and oven.

Despite all the problems we were happy at Hovea St. One wall of the house was mostly glass and the sun shone in on us. Kathy even managed to cook a delicious pavlova though the pavlova tray was too large to allow the oven door to be fully closed.

At the beginning of 1975 I started work as a Tutor in Computer Science and Kathy began her Honours year in Psychology. Her thesis was on *Perception of Rotated Figures* and she wrote it under the supervision of Michael Cook. I remember writing a computer program to generate vast numbers of random polygons with the properties needed for her experiments. Michael was an exacting, hands-on supervisor, and one of the most impressive lecturers I experienced during my undergraduate studies. He would go through Kathy's drafts, word by word, recommending changes to structure and wording. On one occasion they doggedly fought it out over Michael's insistence on the use of the word 'concretization' in a sentence, until Kathy said, "Stop arguing. It doesn't matter!" To which Michael triumphantly responded, "If it doesn't matter, do it my way!"

Needless to say, despite her doubts, Kathy gained First Class Honours.

At that stage, she wasn't convinced that she wanted to do a PhD. She applied for various jobs, including that of Manager of the ANU Creche. Having completed a Psychology degree, including a unit on Developmental Psychology, why not?

At one stage during the early 1980s Kathy became active in the campaign to build an extra creche on campus, despite our having no immediate plans to draw upon childcare services. The Cottage Creche Committee, led by Kathy and Linda Cooke, bid for funding from ANU's Staff Amenities Fund but were unsuccessful. Instead the money was allocated to building and improving tennis courts.⁵

Several years later, we did require childcare services.

⁵Ironically, in recent years, four ANU tennis courts were removed and replaced with a childcare centre!

Chapter 6

Post-graduate work and study

Kathy didn't become a creche manager. Instead, she worked for two years as a Tutor in the ANU Psychology department. She tutored in *Statistics*, *Human Information Processing*, and the introductory unit, *Psychology A01*. She was pleased not to be required to teach *Developmental Psychology* whose lecturer was the formidable Dr Margaret Middleton. Margaret had the habit of sitting in on tutorials, monitoring and correcting the tutors. Prior to the beginning of each course, Margaret would obtain and memorise photographs of the 40 students permitted to enrol. She would then encourage everyone's attention by directing questions to students by name, frequently to their consternation. When I took the unit I was forewarned and sat behind the back row where she couldn't see me!

In her tutoring and supervisory activities, Kathy became friends with several mature age students: Sue Lodge, Marie Newey, Georgia Tayler, and Sue Gordon. Sue Lodge returned to the UK, and lost contact but the other three are among Kathy's closest friends.

Notes from a chat with Georgia Tayler

Georgia Tayler came to ANU in 1981 with her then partner Steve Redman and enrolled in Psychology. Judy Slee and Michael Cook were her Fourth Year Honours supervisors and she then enrolled in a Clinical Masters under Kathy's supervision. Her topic was *Effects on executive functions and planning after head injury*. In her experiments she administered the Rey complex figure test^a to a small, diverse sample of clinical subjects. Georgia remembers Kathy having an enquiring mind and being very clear and open in her supervision. She admired Kathy's innate curiosity and her ability to ask probing questions.

She paints a picture, very familiar to me, of Kathy wrapped in a blanket with a fan heater blowing directly on her. She also remembers a very young Jack, similarly wrapped in a doona in his haven upstairs.

Georgia and Kathy became good friends and Kathy and I were invited to Georgia and Steve's house in Chifley. Kathy was stunned that the lounge room was as big as our four-bedroom ex-guvvie in Downer.

When Georgia and Steve split up in 1989, Kathy was a great listener and very supportive and loyal. It took Georgia two or three years to get over the break-up, but she eventually found a great partner in Greg Battye whom Kathy found very entertaining and creative.

During the 1990s Greg, Georgia, and Kathy formed an enterprise called Battye Delusions which produced tee-shirts and Christmas cards featuring Greg's whimsical cartoons. Georgia remembers Kathy being very enthusiastic about the activity and working on a stall at the Old Bus Depot markets in Kingston, ACT. The four of us drove to Sydney on one occasion to sell the merchandise at a market in Balmain. The business failed financially but was a lot of fun.

Holidays

Our first holiday with Georgia was in about 1991 when Kathy, Jack and I drove our Ford Laser to Central Australia and Georgia flew to Alice Springs and hired a small four wheel drive to join us in exploring the region. We had borrowed a heavy canvas tent from Maria and

Steve, but Georgia brought a bargain light-weight plastic one obtained by Greg. We were only vaguely aware of the wind picking up during the night and in the morning were surprised to find Georgia's tent blown down. We also camped at Ormiston Gorge, marvelling at its beauty but annoyed by the racket of the generator powering the Coke machine in the visitors centre.

We travelled to Kings Canyon, being amazed to find that a grand camping ground had sprung up since our previous visit. Georgia and I swam in the pool upstream of the instant waterfall (just add water). Kathy watched from the natural amphitheatre around the pool and was joined by a busload of tourists. We visited Uluru of course and Kata Tjuta and loved walking in the Valley of the Winds.

In 2000, Kathy and Georgia organised a holiday along Ninagaloo Reef, WA for the four of us plus Jack and his friend Sam. We flew to Perth and hired cars for the journey north. It was a really happy time from start to finish. Kathy and even the boys were very impressed by the wildflowers in Kalbarri, and everyone loved the dolphins in Monkey Mia. The vehicles were equipped with two way radios and Greg entertained us for a while by doing a very plausible imitation of a country and western disc jockey.

We stayed in cabins at a campground in Coral Bay, regularly visited by huge monitor lizards, and were able to watch the Sydney olympics on television. Georgia remembers Kathy, not normally a lover of swimming, being in raptures snorkelling on the beautiful reef, only a few metres from the beach. At Turquoise Bay, Greg amused the company by emerging from the water with a huge moustache in the form of a large piece of seaweed.

Kathy and Georgia organised a grand holiday adventure in 2010, to the Pilbara. The party included Georgia's siblings Rod and Nissie, and Rod's wife Cath. We flew into Paraburdoo and rented Toyota Prados, driving first to some eco-tents in Karajini National Park. All the rental vehicles were fitted with flashing orange lights to permit their use on mine sites.

Rod is an anaesthetist who had become a campaigner against excessive sugar in our diets. Kathy was stunned when he pulled out a computer and data projector in our shared house in Coral Bay and delivered a lecture on sugar. She was amused to find Cath down at the bakery tucking into sugary bakery delights.

Joint projects

In the 1990s Kathy and Georgia worked on scripts for an anti-bullying computer program for ACT education. Around that time Georgia remembers Kathy writing her head injury book^b and being gobsmacked at her focus and determination – details were important and accuracy vital.

At CMHR Georgia saw Kathy as incredibly motivated to do good research and to deliver community impact. Georgia contributed some content to MoodGYM and saw it as a major breakthrough. CMHR later employed her to write content for e-Couch.

She watched Kathy blazing her way onto the international research scene and was mightily impressed by her energy, despite the physical limitations imposed by CFS. She observed Kathy's utter tenacity to go on, disregarding physical discomfort, hunger and tiredness. Although softly spoken and lovely to her, Georgia saw Kathy developing grit and fierceness when necessary at CMHR.

Creighton

Georgia has visited Creighton quite a few times. She and Greg often drive between Canberra and Melbourne and enjoy stopping off at the farm. Georgia met Kathy's mum Pat who like her had been a student at Tintern Grammar School. After Pat's death she remembers driving Harold between Canberra and Euroa. She could see Kathy's deep connection to the Creighton land and how it anchored her. She has watched Kathy driving the evolution of the farm and stayed in Creighton II.

^ahttps://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rey%E2%80%9393Osterrieth_complex_figure Accessed 19 July 2023.

^bPublished in 1997

6.1 54 Gardiner St, Downer

In 1976, Kathy's parents decided that we should move out of the garden flat in Hovea St, which they considered unhealthy. They came up to Canberra and Pat accompanied us while an estate agent took us around entry-level properties then on the market. We picked an ex-government house at 54 Gardiner St, Downer – 'Upper Downer' as we preferred to call it. Kathy's father was all over the mechanics of property contracts, mortgages, and building problems. He insisted that we engage a building inspector to report on the house (so we could sue if necessary) even though he did his own fine-tooth-comb inspection and wrote a very detailed report.

One of the concerns was a gas heater in the lounge room, which discharged flue gases (carbon monoxide and dioxide) into the roof space. It certainly warmed up the living areas but left a strong smell. We replaced it with a number of Dimplex oil-filled electric heaters, and, ignoring warnings, I fixed a wooden board to the top of one of them, to make a warm and comfortable seat. While warming herself on the Dimplex, Kathy once lost balance and lurched forward to avoid going through the window behind her. Isaac Newton reared his head and the heavy Dimplex shot backward, shattering the large window and landing in the garden in a pile of shards.

Harold insisted that we do the conveyancing through a lawyer. We asked former President of the ANU Students Association Richard Refshauge for advice and he recommended the conveyancing lawyer in his law firm MacPhillamy, Cummins and Gibson. We handed over a 10% deposit, and a cheque from Harold and Pat for the remaining 90%, plus stamp duty. A mortgage was formally registered and I wrote a program to calculate the monthly repayments corresponding to the parameters we'd agreed.

As the day of Settlement approached, someone from MacPhillamy, Cummins and Gibson rang Kathy to ask how we intended to pay the balance owing on the house. Kathy, unimpressed, replied, "Why not use the cheque we gave you a couple of months ago?"

We paid all the instalments like clockwork and occasionally made extra payments, eventually discharging the mortgage several years early. Like me and her parents, Kathy has no liking for being in debt.

Gavin and Elspeth Seagrim

From 1952 Gavin Seagrim was an Associate Professor in the ANU^a Psychology department,^b well-known for having worked with the famous developmental psychologist Jean Piaget in Geneva and having translated some of Piaget's books into English. His wife Elspeth was a somewhat eccentric Scot with a very upper-class accent. She was medically trained and held a senior position in the Commonwealth Department of Health.

Gavin's father was an officer in the (British) Indian Army. On retirement he bought land in Dieppe, France to try his hand at farming. Gavin grew up there but, of course, was sent off to boarding school in England, where he was known as 'Frog'. In 1936 Gavin followed the family tradition and joined the (British) Indian Army as an officer and served until Indian independence in 1947, attaining the rank of Major.^c At the end of his service, he took advantage of a scheme which supported demobilised service people to gain a university degree and was eventually awarded a Bachelor of Arts at the University of London.

Gavin retained souvenirs of his military service, including a ceremonial sword, a toothbrush moustache, a military bearing and a decisive manner. He usually had a twinkle in his eye but could be quite formidable, telling a Psychology A01 student that he hoped by the end of the course she'd know enough not to ask silly questions like that one! On the other hand, when teaching on the statistical topic of 'regression to the mean', he explained that this happened only on average and that there were certain to be exceptions. "For example my son is much more intelligent than me." He laughed appreciatively when a student called out, "Regression to the mean."^d

After Kathy graduated, we became friends with Gavin and Elspeth and visited them at their home in the Canberra suburb of Griffith and on their farm in the idyllic Brindabella Valley. On

one occasion we were invited to Griffith for dinner with the famous historian Manning Clark. Due to a mis-communication, Manning missed the meal but arrived later for a drink and a chat.

Post-retirement, Gavin and Elspeth had purchased another farm near Bega but we never saw it. They drove huge distances every week between their properties.

Gavin took up fine woodworking as a hobby and he and I jointly bought a 500kg cast-iron bandsaw. It required three-phase power and so it had to be installed at our place in Downer rather than at Brindabella.

When Jean-Pierre and Nicole Thierry visited us from Villers-Bretonneux, we took them out to Brindabella for a meal with the Seagrimms. Apart from Jean-Pierre being in a total panic on the drive down the mountain to Brindabella and trying to grab the steering wheel, the visit went very well.

I recently learned^e that, in the late 1960s, Gavin was one of the founders of the Association for Modern Education school which our son Jack attended decades later.

^aActually the Canberra University College prior to amalgamation with ANU.

^b<https://psychology.anu.edu.au/about/history> Accessed 19 July 2023.

^c<https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/f02cbf92-b71e-46de-98c4-e013c05c0e91> Accessed 19 July 2023.

^dImplying that Gavin's IQ was substantially below the mean.

^e<http://www.derekwrigley.com/social-design/1969-association-for-modern-education-ame-working-party-contributor/index.html> Accessed 19 July 2023

6.2 Chronic Fatigue Syndrome: Origins

Unfortunately, in 1977, Kathy contracted a combination of glandular fever and toxoplasmosis, a blood parasite often carried by cats. She became very sick indeed. Her friend Linda Hort was worried that she was not receiving adequate medical treatment and dragged her off to see a doctor with a strong reputation as a diagnostician. This was the beginning of the accursed Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS) which would afflict her until around 2000. Kathy lay in bed and was so ill she was driven to watch episodes of *Days of Our Lives* and *The Young and the Restless* as well as listening to parliamentary sessions.

Linda was a fellow PhD student in the ANU Psychology Department, taking time off from her love of horse riding. ☺ They have remained good friends ever since.

6.3 PhD

Also in 1977, Kathy published her first academic paper, Cook, ML, Field, J and Griffiths, KM, *The perception of solid form in early infancy*. At the end of that year, having somewhat recovered, she decided to enrol for a PhD. Unlike tutoring, the early stages of a PhD provide more flexibility to cope with periods of illness.

Kathy was successful in gaining an Australian Postgraduate Award (APA) scholarship to carry out a PhD at ANU. In those days there was a Psych department rule that ANU students were required to do their postgraduate studies at a different university. An exception had been made for Judy Slee and this provided a precedent for Kathy who also had a partner working at ANU.

Kathy was interested in extending her study of human visual perception to look at perception deficits in people with brain damage, specifically those with the deficit known as *constructional apraxia*. Her father's brain tumour had no doubt influenced her interest in brain injury.

Kathy's supervisors were Michael Cook and Ray Newcombe, an eminent neurosurgeon who worked at the Royal Canberra Hospital and who had trained in London. Michael, continuing his habit from Honours, continued to demand fine-detail changes in the drafts. By this stage Kathy was confident enough to argue back when appropriate.

Michael and Ronnie Cook / Verbal jousting

Michael Cook joined the ANU Psychology Department in 1961 as a lecturer, coming from the University of Sussex. He enjoyed intellectual conversation and regularly joined James Grieve, Peter Herbst and Pat White for verbal jousting over lunch in the ANU student union. James^a was a lecturer in French language and literature and famous for translating two volumes of Marcel Proust's *À la recherche du temps perdu*. He invariably turned up with an Opinel folding knife, a lump of bread, a hunk of cheese, and a partly consumed bottle of red wine. Peter^b was Chair of the Philosophy Department in the School of General Studies at ANU, having served time in internment camps during WWII. Pat^c was Sub-Dean and Faculty Secretary of the ANU Arts Faculty, and later ANU Assistant Registrar. Michael, James, Peter and Pat all joined ANU at similar times.

Kathy and I considered ourselves honoured to be invited to these lunchtime discussions. In subsequent years the composition of the group changed and psychology department members Judy Slee and Cobie Brinkman became regular attendees.

Michael's wife Ronnie was a superb cook and conversationalist. She delighted in entertaining large groups for multi-course gourmet dinners.

Ronnie and Michael bought a small block of land on the Deua River between the Deua and Monga National Parks on the Braidwood-Moruya Road. They bought and self-built a kit home there, and spent a lot of time there. Once, when Michael was on sabbatical, we were encouraged to spend as much time as we could there. Apart from the lack of electricity and the need to use a shovel when visiting the toilet, the environment was lovely.

When the kit house was being delivered a worker managed to get a large lump of wood embedded in his hand and sat complacently while Michael operated to remove it. He had assumed that Doctor Cook must have been a medical practitioner.

To Michael and Ronnie's immense sorrow, the kit house burned down in the 2019/20 bushfires.

^a<https://oa.anu.edu.au/obituary/grieve-james-30141> Accessed 19 July 2023.

^b<https://oa.anu.edu.au/obituary/herbst-peter-32618> Accessed 19 July 2023.

^c<https://oa.anu.edu.au/obituary/white-patricia-marie-pat-33003> Accessed 19 July 2023

In early January 1979, Kathy headed off to England to spend time with a leading expert in her field: Dr Maria Wyke, a neuropsychologist at The National Neurological Diseases Hospital, Maida Vale. She also visited Oliver Zangwill, Professor of Experimental Psychology at Cambridge University and Fellow of the Royal Society; and Malcolm Piercy, an expert in constuctional apraxia based in Zangwill's department. In the same Cambridge department was Felicia Huppert, an Australian who, on a visit to Canberra with her geophysicist husband Herbert Huppert, had strongly recommended that Kathy approach Maria Wyke and arrange a short placement.

Her trip was partly financed by a grant from the Canberra Private Practice Fund, arranged by Ray Newcombe.

Our friend Gordon Lister had asked his colleague Helen Moore to arrange a few nights accommodation for Kathy in an Imperial College Hall of Residence. When that room became no longer available, Kathy went to the Accommodation Bureau at Victoria Station and managed to line up a cheap room in a Paddington hotel.

Maria Wyke felt that these arrangements weren't suitable and gained her a place in the nurses quarters at the Convalescent Home in East Finchley. (At Kathy's expense.) This was a long way from Maida Vale, but it was arranged that Kathy would be transported to and fro by ambulance. Due to heavy snow, the driver used his own car but it slid out of control and hit a barrier. Fortunately they didn't need an ambulance!¹

I travelled with Kathy – our first trip overseas. We stayed for a few days in Cambridge with Huw Price, then a PhD student. He and Debbie rented a house with an 11-foot (3.35 metre) frontage and a wolf knocker. In recent years, Huw returned to Cambridge as the Bertrand Russell Professor of

¹You can read about that and many other good stories in my book, *Europe on Five Ideas a Day*. <https://david-hawking.net/books/5Ideas.pdf> Accessed 19 July 2023.

Philosophy and a Fellow of Trinity College.

During her PhD studies Kathy had brief stints of employment in the Psychology Department as a part-time Lecturer and later as a Research Officer. She wrote a successful proposal for a National Health and Medical Research Council grant to study the effect of traumatic brain injury on alcohol sensitivity. Ray Newcombe and Bill Gladstones were also involved in the project. It was somewhat ironic that the experiments required Kathy, a virtual tee-totaller, to administer measured volumes of alcohol to participants. Kathy received training from the police in how to accurately administer breath tests.

Kathy's thesis was entitled *A neuropsychological study of graphical copying disability*, and it is available online.² Due to ANU requirements for double-spaced, single-sided, wide-margin format, the printed version required two volumes.

Kathy submitted it for examination in April 1982 and, two days later, we headed back to Europe on holiday. While in London, we went to dinner with Maria Wyke at her house in central London. Returning to Canberra via Hong Kong, we stayed for a few enjoyable days with May-Jane Chen, a colleague from the ANU Psychology Department, in her large apartment on the campus of the Chinese University of Hong Kong in Sha Tin.

Kathy's examiners were Maria Wyke, Malcolm Piercy, and Kevin Walsh, a clinical neuropsychologist on the staff of the Psychology Department at the University of Melbourne. Of course the thesis passed, but one examiner found a typographical error and concluded that the thesis needed thorough proof reading. That irked me because, at Kathy's request, I had proof-read it at least twice, once reading backwards! It also irked Kathy that that examiner's report contained around 13 typos in a couple of pages and criticised her for not citing a paper which hadn't been published at the time she submitted!

On return to Canberra Kathy worked as a part-time Editorial Assistant on the Australian Journal of Early Childhood, and took on part-time Research Assistant (RA) roles for Sydney University's Department of Education, and the Psychology Department at ANU.

²<https://openresearch-repository.anu.edu.au/handle/1885/141345?mode=full> Accessed 19 July 2023.

Chapter 7

Neuropsychology, pregnancy, and CFS

Toward the end of 1982, Kathy obtained a position as a Clinical Neuropsychologist, working in the Neurology Unit at Royal Canberra Hospital (RCH) with neurologist Dr Gytis Danta, but reporting to Irene Birmingham, head psychologist at ACT Health. In that era brain scanning technology was far less advanced and much less accessible than it is today. There was much value in neuropsychological testing for differential diagnosis of neurological conditions. The demand was enormous and Kathy's waiting list became very long. Neuropsychological testing takes several hours and many extra hours are needed to analyse results and write a report. It didn't help to know that at other hospitals around the country similar patient loads were shared by multiple neuropsychologists.

When Kathy expressed concern at how long patients were having to wait for testing, and that patients could die on the waiting list, one doctor expressed the view that this was a positive – reducing waiting times for others!

Sometimes testing was very stressful. On one occasion, a man who had been charged with murder was brought in for diagnosis. He had a hatred of women. Kathy was in a small room with him by herself, with the guard sitting outside. "I'm getting very angry! ..."

The administrative staff at RCH were not always helpful. On one occasion Kathy submitted an urgent purchase order for testing materials. Several days later, she received the purchase order back again, unactioned. An entry on the form was highlighted and marked with This must be underlined. I.e. "I can see perfectly what you want, but I'm going to teach you a lesson. You need to understand how important it is to get details right." They addressed the returned envelope to the wrong part of the hospital!

7.1 Returning to ANU

Kathy put up with the overload and the stress for a couple of years before resigning in 1984. She initially applied for a lectureship in Kevin Walsh's group at the University of Melbourne. I encouraged her application but after thinking about it for a while I realised I didn't want to move to Melbourne or any other big city. I told her this the evening before she flew to Melbourne for interview, and that meant that she didn't go in with all guns blazing.

The interview panel was enormous – ten people I think – and it included Geoffrey Blainey,¹ Dean of the Faculty of Arts. Blainey was a very well-known and controversial historian who opposed Asian immigration. The Psychology Department was clearly split so Kathy may have missed out anyway, but I very much regret having mucked her around.

Instead she took on a series of Research Assistant, Lecturer, and Research Associate roles at ANU and elsewhere. Later in the decade she was an advisor on Anne Mathew's PhD on reaching behaviour in infants. Michael Cook was Anne's supervisor. With that supervisory panel I can't imagine that there were any grammatical errors in Anne's final thesis.

Anne visited the farm in Euroa and we attended her wedding in Canberra.

¹https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geoffrey_Blainey Accessed 19 July 2023.



2023: Kathy, Anne Mathew, and Georgia Tayler reunited in Canberra after a gap of decades. Anne has worked at Harvard for thirty years.

Anne Mathew's memories of Kathy

I first met Kathy in 1984 at the Psychology Department at the Australian National University where I was a first-year PhD student and I fondly recall the time we spent together there. Kathy was one of my PhD advisors and she helped shape my academic training at the ANU. Although she and I worked on different topics, I always thought of us as a wonderful, collegial team.

Kathy's deep intelligence, wide knowledge and interest in the field of infant perceptual-motor coordination inspired me to pursue my own PhD research work with determination. I studied the control of reaching movements by very young infants and Kathy helped with the design and execution of the experiments.

I will always be grateful for the wisdom she imparted, and the positive memories I have of working alongside her remain with me. One of the many wonderful memories from outside the lab — our trip to Euroa, Victoria. This occurred soon after I arrived in Australia from Bangalore, India, and I remember it as the best kind of culture shock. It took us a while to get there, and the town and surrounding area seemed very flat. Compared to where I had come from, there were very few people and the sense of space and openness, and clarity was palpable. I recall the incredible warmth and how welcoming Kathy's parents were to this newly arrived stranger. Everything I know about sheep rearing, I learned from Kathy's dad Harold on that trip 😊.

I later learned that the name Euroa comes from an Aboriginal word meaning 'joyful' and this certainly sums up my feelings about that experience. I remain grateful to Kathy and her family for giving me such a warm Aussie welcome and sharing a great rural experience. It set the stage for my productive years at the ANU and prepared me for the journey ahead.

How great it was to touch base again last month (Jan 2023) in Georgia Tayler's home to relive it all. Here's to Kathy!!

7.2 Pregnancy and CFS

Kathy became pregnant in 1986, and the hormonal changes associated with pregnancy seemed to significantly worsen her CFS. Giving birth at the old Royal Canberra Hospital in April 1987 was quite traumatic. Not only was she utterly exhausted following the birth, to the point of being unable to stand up in the shower, but she also experienced significant neurological symptoms, including dysphasia² and possibly consistent with having sustained a stroke.

Kathy: The neurological symptoms occurred immediately after birth in the delivery room. I experienced 'aphasia' (not able to talk though I knew what I wanted to say) and a hemianopia (blindness on one side of space).

Following the birth I found that the symptoms of physical weakness experienced in the months prior to the birth were significantly exacerbated to the point where I despaired of being able to walk anywhere. I contemplated attempting to crawl but thought that might be a bit embarrassing. I do remember having to sit on the floor.

Despite lack of understanding from the maternity ward staff, a former colleague visited her in hospital and relayed the history to Gytis Danta who immediately visited her and diagnosed her problem – fortunately, not as serious as it might have been.



1987: Kathy with one-day-old Jack in the maternity ward at the then Royal Canberra Hospital.

At home in Downer with a large nipple-chewing infant – the gobs of blood he worryingly vomited was not from him – Kathy's CFS became very severe. She found that walking one block from the house and back depleted her to the point of needing days in bed to recover. It was a terrible period for her because it was critical that she didn't exceed the physical limits imposed by CFS, but the only way to find out where the limits were was by exceeding them.

²Inability to speak.

We managed to get a place for our son Jack in the long established ANU creche at the age of about nine months. We knew many families with children in the same creche and it worked out well for us and for Jack until he started experiencing episodes of stinking diarrhoea and being repeatedly expelled from creche. Giardiasis was diagnosed and he was treated with Flagyl etc. five times before being referred to a paediatrician. The paediatrician said he thought that giardiasis was unlikely and that it might be allergy to dairy products or oranges.

All the creche absences put stress on the family because I had a responsible job and Kathy was trying to do hers while being quite unwell.

Having eliminated both allergy candidates from Jack's diet, the family returned to relative (still CFS-blighted) normality. One of the creche staff was sceptical that Jack's problems could be due to good healthy cow's milk so Kathy re-introduced dairy as a test. The creche worker reported that his behaviour almost immediately deteriorated to unacceptable levels and that she didn't care if he never drank milk again.

Kathy's patchwork pattern of university employment continued until 1990. Our differing employment hours and the need for creche drop-offs and pick-ups meant that we needed two cars. With Harold's help we bought a second-hand Falcon ute, and fitted it with a child seat. At the same time we were looking out for a possible house move. Kathy had never particularly liked the Downer house and traffic and traffic lights had over the years multiplied on the route to ANU creche. Best move out before they start installing them in people's driveways!

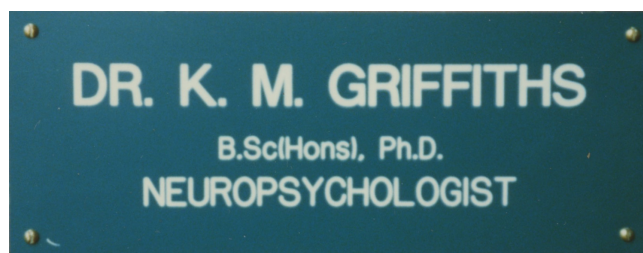
7.3 Moving to Turner, starting private practice

Since we seemed destined to spend a long time with at least one of us working on the ANU campus, we obtained a block and section map of the only adjacent suburb, Turner. We eliminated all the houses close to busy roads or which were outside a 2km radius of ANU's Chifley Library, and leafleted the rest with a corny poem, written by me, asking if we could buy their house. Somewhat surprisingly, we were successful and found a charming house where we've lived ever since. Pat and Harold provided bridging finance and a mortgage.³

Kathy set about the task of selling our house in Downer with focus and talent. She wrote clever ads for the paper, and put me to work tarting up the house to present it in best possible light. Several real estate agents rang to tell her that she'd never succeed in selling the house privately because she didn't have the financial resources to market the house properly. Huh? Where do those financial resources come from?

In the end we were successful in selling for the price we asked and, a third of a century later the purchasers are still in residence.

Once settled into Turner at the very end of 1989, we made small modifications to enable Kathy to operate a business from home: An off-street carpark to satisfy the ACT government; improvements to floors and walls; new second-hand furniture; new office equipment; psychological tests; business cards and letterhead; and a plaque for the front door. In 1990, Kathy started her neuropsychology practice.



Paying off the mortgage, while operating two cars, paying creche fees, and waiting for revenue from Kathy's practice to build up, caused us a couple of years of financial pressure. We eliminated luxuries and carefully planned our grocery purchases.

³Of course we paid it all back ahead of time.

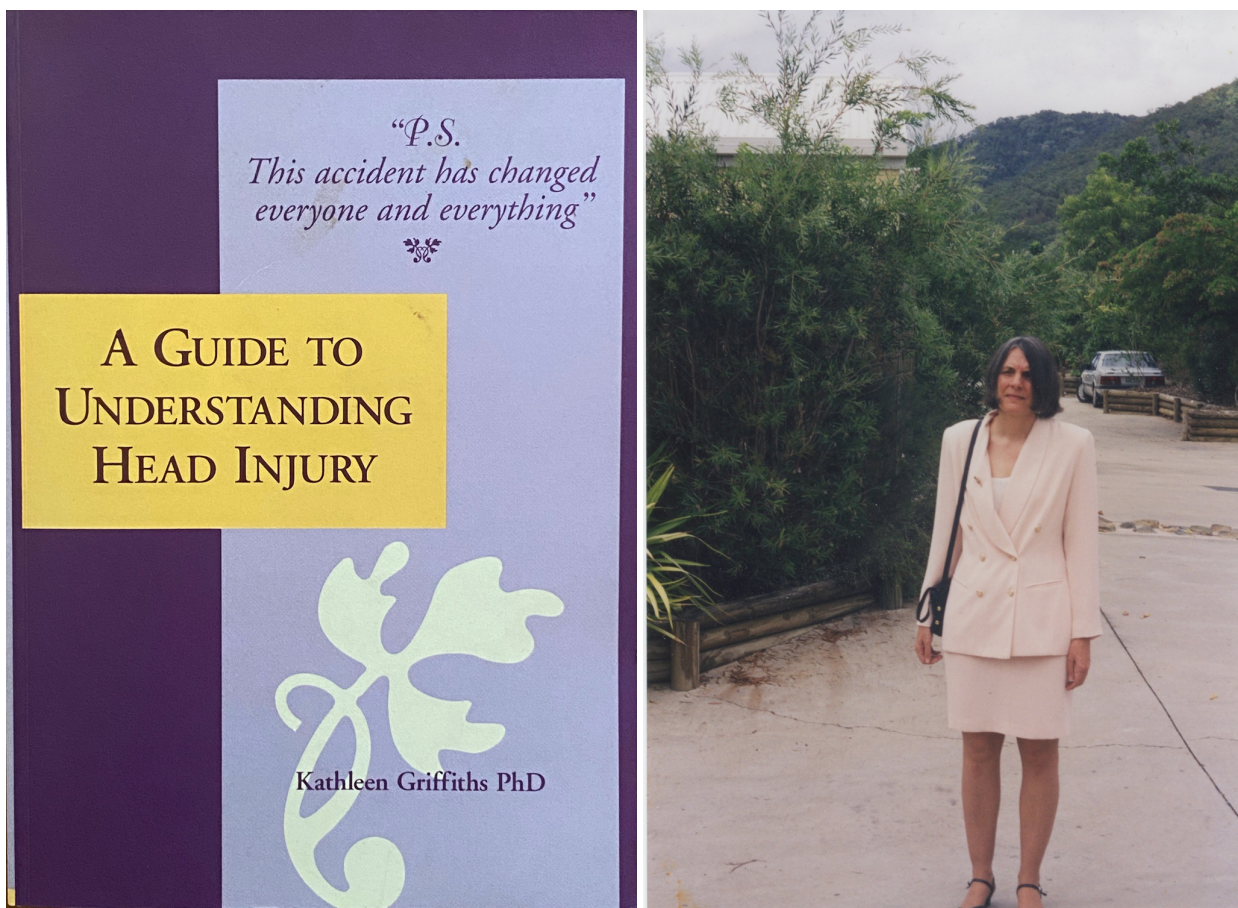
Kathy's practice continued for a few years but it was hard to charge appropriately for the time and skill needed to do a proper assessment and write the report, given lack of support to clients from Medicare or health funds. There was a fair amount of stress in running the practice, due to Kathy's empathy with severely affected clients, and to the use of reports in court cases.

Over time, Kathy's business evolved more into government consulting, operating under the business name: Psychological Research and Information Service (PRAIS).

She wrote clinical practice guidelines for the NHMRC, including guidelines on how to write clinical practice guidelines. She worked like a Trojan⁴ on some of these consultancies. See Chapter 11 for details.

On a voluntary basis she wrote a chapter *Neuropsychological findings in professional boxers* for a 1994 National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) publication on *Boxing injuries*.⁵

A setback occurred in 1996 when, returning from Christmas holidays in Euroa, we found that our house had been comprehensively burgled. All of Kathy's office equipment was stolen, along with domestic appliances, heirloom jewellery, CDs, and even tinned food and frozen meat. A fingerprint identified one of the offenders as a violent criminal from Sydney. Insurance covered most of the cost of replacing those things which were capable of replacement, but the process was long and disruptive.



Left: Kathy's head injury guide for families and friends, published in 1997. Right: Kathy preparing to launch the book at the 1997 Australian Psychology Association conference in Cairns.

⁴I'd get into trouble if I said maniac!

⁵Now rescinded but online at <https://webarchive.nla.gov.au/awa/20170819040839/https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines-publications/sil> Accessed 19 July 2023.

7.4 A book on head injury

Around this time Kathy started writing a book on head injury.⁶ With her PhD and many years of experience testing patients and meeting their family members, she was eminently qualified to write a guide for people caring for or interacting with a person with a head injury.

Once finished, the question was how to publish it in a way which would reach the intended lay audience. Mainstream publishers from the US wanted *her* to line up subsidies before they would take it on, and still planned to sell it for a price greater than ordinary people could afford – above \$80 from memory. Eventually the Australian Psychological Association (APA) said that they would be delighted to publish it and could cover production and distribution costs with a cover price of A\$19.80.

They asked Kathy what package had she used to typeset the book. When she said, “Word 5.0 for the Apple Macintosh”, they laughed and said, “Impossible. You can’t produce a book using that! What did you really use? Quark Express? PageMaker?” She had encountered many problems using that version of Word, but only one that her determination was unable to overcome.

The APA said that the PDF supplied to their printer needed to have crop marks⁷ on every page. I thoroughly read the Word manual and decided that the best way to do it was to insert a tiny snippet of PostScript into the footer for the document. I wrote the PostScript and inserted it.

We were initially pleased with the result but later discovered that, for some inexplicable reason, this change to footers seemed to have caused the formatting within the pages to change, leaving gaps in the black outline around many of the featured panels within the book. We found no way to reverse the changes, and Kathy ended up using a black FineLiner pen to fill in the gaps on the camera-ready copy.

Of course it turned out that crop marks were not needed on pages other than the very first. ☺ We could have achieved that very easily and avoided all the trouble!

In 1995, Kathy started part-time volunteering at ANU’s Centre for Mental Health Research. She also worked with psychiatrist Les Drew on a five-year study of Clozapine, a drug used to treat schizophrenia. I believe that the study may have been funded by a grant from the Canberra private practice fund.

From the late 1990s, Kathy’s work centered around the Centre for Mental Health Research (CMHR) located at ANU. I write about the CMHR journey in Chapters 10 and 12.

⁶P.S. *This accident has changed everyone and everything: A guide to understanding head injury*. <https://catalogue.nla.gov.au/Record/1482940> Accessed 19 July 2023.

⁷Fine lines outside the actual page to guide the guillotine which would trim the pages to their final size.

Chapter 8

Jack

Our son Jack was born in April 1987, while Kathy was suffering badly from CFS. (See Page 91.) Her illness got worse, but Jack gaining admission to the Nursery section of the ANU Creche (University Preschool and Child Care Centre) provided some respite.

From a very early age, Jack knew his own mind. Even as a toddler, he had definite ideas about fashion. He would resist wearing clothes he didn't like and if we succeeded in getting him to put on something we liked but he didn't, he'd soon tear it off. On the frequent occasions when he wanted to do something which wasn't safe or wasn't appropriate, we would say, "N. O. No!"

At least once, he signalled his defiance by saying loudly, "N. S. Yes!"

When Grandad Harold caught him doing something he shouldn't. Jack said, "I'm not a little bugger, Grandad. I'm a big bugger."

8.1 An epic journey to central Australia

At the age of four we took Jack off on a holiday to central Australia: Dubbo, Nyngan, Broken Hill, Peterborough, Wilcannia, Wilpena Pound, Lake Eyre, Marree, William Creek, Coober Pedy, Alice Springs, Kings Canyon, West MacDonnell Ranges, Uluru, Kata Tjuta, Murray Bridge. We covered 10,000 km in about 20 days, and met up with our friend Georgia, who flew to Alice Springs and rented a car.

We were driving a very unsuitable vehicle for the journey, a Ford Laser, loaded to the gunwales. We had two spare wheels, large jerrycans of water and petrol, a tent, a large Esky, and all the stuff needed for three weeks of camping. The boot was full, the roof-rack heavily loaded and the left hand side of the rear seat piled to the roof. Jack sat in a tiny cubby hole on the other side of the rear seat and never once complained.

The car's wheels were splayed out due to the load, and on the Oodnadatta Track we had to drive on the winrows of stones to avoid scraping the bottom. That risked damaging tyres. By William Creek we realised that continuing was a dubious proposition, and decided to take the dry-weather-only track across to Coober Pedy, correctly reasoning that in dry weather sand would be much more suitable for our conveyance than was the all-weather Oodnadatta Track.

Before we left Canberra, we'd asked the O'Connor garage (long defunct) to make the car ready for a long hard journey and, in particular, to check the cause of a petrol smell. First stop was Dubbo zoo, where we found that the idle jet on the carburettor was blocked. Attempting to keep below the speed limit while driving around the zoo was a nightmare. I had to continually slip the clutch to avoid the engine stalling or the limit being exceeded. The car still stunk of petrol.

We stopped at a garage in Nyngan on the Bogan, and they restored the car's ability to idle. The garage owner also correctly diagnosed the cause of the petrol smell as a rust hole in the fuel tank. With most of our many possessions out on the concrete apron, he took out the tank and emptied it, then flushed it with water and, safely behind the garage in case of explosion, welded up a hole in the tank. As he brought it back to reinstall it, eagle-eyed Kathy spotted another hole!

By Wilcannia, the engine was running rough again, and a mechanic improved things a little by

reconnecting something which had come adrift. By Peterborough, there were more problems, and another garage improved it by replumbing the exhaust gas reflux system. Then, between William Creek and our underground motel room in Coober Pedy, we noticed that our exhaust was leaking. A garage in Coober Pedy advised us to drive to Alice Springs and get it fixed there. In Coober Pedy we would have to wait several days for the arrival of a complete new exhaust system and it would cost \$1200. If it was the same story in Alice Springs, at least we would be happy spending a few days there doing all the tourist things.

When I went to collect the car from the Alice Springs muffler shop, I was stunned to discover that they had removed the exhaust, plated and welded the holes, and reinstalled it, and the price was \$10. Ten dollars! I couldn't believe it. The repair was still going strong when we traded in the car years later.

It was hard for us to understand why the O'Connor garage closed soon after our return. ☺

We hope Jack enjoyed and learned from our great adventure. We saw wonderful things and had great times, but the car caused us a great deal of stress, and the camping was often bloody hard work. As an example, we arrived in the camp ground beside the Darling river in Wilcannia at about 11pm, after a long day's driving and had to set up the tent in the dark and cook a meal.



1991: Me, Jack, and Georgia Tayler having a good laugh at Uluru. Photo: Kathy

8.2 A gentle giant

Jack was quite rough with toys. On one occasion, a neighbour brought over a large Tonka truck in immaculate condition which her near-adult son had played with since infancy. Within an hour Jack had used an adult shovel to fill it up with dirt and a full-size sledge hammer to test its claims of robustness. We never dared show the neighbour the results of his ministrations.

Jack was big and strong. At an incredibly young age, he showed that he could lift his mother off the ground.

He was also resourceful. One day he was visiting Alex Westcombe, the boy living in the house behind us. He and Alex were playing upstairs while Sue Westcombe vacuumed downstairs. The

boys crawled into a small cupboard and closed the door behind them. It latched shut and couldn't be opened from inside. Calls for help went unheard. Alex was in a panic, so Jack decided to try to burst the door open. He put his feet against the door and back against the opposite wall and pushed.

It wasn't the door latch which gave way but rather the plaster wall into the parents' bedroom! Rescue effected, and we were proud of Jack, but Alex's father wasn't best pleased.

When Jack finished a year in the Kangaroos (the most senior group at the ANU Creche) there was debate about whether he should stay there for another year, or start primary school as one of the youngest in the school. Would he be very bored at Creche? Would he be mature enough for primary school?

We ended up taking Bronwen's advice (she was the chief Kangaroo minder) that Jack would be bored at creche. He seemed to be very bright, even at that stage being able to do simple algebra problems such as:

- If $x + 7 = 10$, what is x ?
- If $x^2 = 16$, what is x ?

He also showed at about age six, a remarkable ability with syllogisms – better than mine! *The Complete Works of Lewis Carroll* contains 60 such problems, starting from three propositions and working up to ten. We worked through quite a few. Here's an example with four propositions:

1. No birds, except ostriches, are 9 feet high;
2. There are no birds in this aviary that belong to anyone but *me*;
3. No ostriches live on mince pies;
4. I have no birds that are less than 9 feet high.

Conclusion: No bird in this aviary lives on mince pies.

Despite his strength and occasional destructiveness, he showed patience and fine-motor skills. During his later years at high school we used to go on family outings to computer fairs looking for accessories and parts. Kathy and I were often on the lookout for thumb drives, external hard drives, or travel mice, but Jack was interested in computer parts.

On one such visit, having saved up money from birthday and Christmas presents and extracted parental agreement to a dollar-for-dollar subsidy, Jack went around the stalls twice, looking for all the parts to build a games computer. The first time was to locate all the bits and to find the cheapest suppliers. The second time was to actually make the purchases.

Arriving home with case, fans, motherboard, CPU, graphics card, SIMMs, disk drives, keyboard, mouse, etc., he set about assembling them into a working computer. It was a non-trivial exercise to seat the CPU chip, and affix the large heat sink after application of thermal paste. Once assembly was complete, it worked reliably, first go. We were quite proud that he had managed to make a complete list of parts, ensure their compatibility, and to successfully perform the delicate process of assembly. He's built several computers since then. Just the other day he poured scorn on my it-just-works characterisation of Apple Macintoshes. Mine had just returned from being repaired after three years and Jack pointed out that he was still using a computer he built in 2011 and that it had never failed.

Jack was sometimes quite bold. One evening we were having dinner at the Ottoman Restaurant in Barton, and 15-year-old Jack noticed that then Leader of the Opposition Kim Beazley was sitting with a group at the adjacent table. He waited very patiently until there was a break in their conversation then walked up to Beazley and asked him what he thought about the war in Iraq.

8.3 Primary education

On Jack's first day at Turner Primary, pupils in kindergarten gathered in the main building before following their teacher Wendy Cave, to the kinder class room. Wendy set off, followed by 24 of her 25 students, like a string of ducklings. Jack, the 25th, went off exploring in another direction. Like Kathy and Harold, Jack never mindlessly follows the crowd.

A work colleague of mine asked whether Jack's teacher was any good. When we said she was wonderful, Vicki said, "Oh, that's a pity! Each of our children had one really good teacher in their 13 years of school. It's a pity to waste it on Kindergarten."

Wendy reported to us that when she told the class that they'd run out of time for the activity they were doing, she heard Jack say, "Oh dear. The river of time must have sprung a leak."

Despite his boldness, resourcefulness, intelligence, size and strength, Jack was unhappy at Turner Primary School, and very reluctant to go to school. After a particularly unhappy drop-off one morning, one of the teachers actually sat on him to keep him from running off.

At the time, Turner adopted a silly policy of combining classes. The result was 60 or more children in a large room with two teachers sitting on the sidelines, and one at the front, spending most of their time telling the class to be quiet. This didn't suit Jack, and we didn't think it was sensible.

Jack had a run-in with the Turner school librarian who accused him of damaging a book. Jack correctly protested that he hadn't caused the damage, and was shocked to the core when he was punished anyway. How could you get into trouble when you told the truth and hadn't done what you were accused of?

In one of Jack's reports from Turner Primary, a teacher noted his lack of social skills. This was diametrically opposite to our own observations, and also in stark contrast with an earlier report, praising Jack's ability to interact with children with disabilities. Socialising with friends was Jack's *raison d'être*! Had the teacher confused him with someone else?

Several children of our work colleagues had attended the Association of Modern Education (AME) School¹, an alternative school on the other side of Canberra, and rated it extremely highly. Maybe Jack would thrive at AME?

Jack loved it. It turned out that there was a bus to AME which Jack could catch close to our house, and he showed no reluctance to take it. The school was located in a large area of scrubland and pupils were given a huge amount of freedom to roam and climb trees. Indeed, the only two rules were that pupils were not permitted to go to the dam unaccompanied and they weren't allowed to leave the grounds without permission. The class was very small and the school atmosphere was calm and welcoming.

AME teachers knew their students much better than did the staff at Turner. In an early meeting with the AME principal, she praised Jack's social development. In our first parent-teacher meeting with Anne, only a few days in, she accurately described the boy we knew.

Jack's time at AME was happy and productive but, unfortunately, the year before he arrived, the school had been through a major financial crisis and barely survived. The principal of 20 years left. We incorrectly judged that the school had reached rock bottom and would rise again. Unfortunately, that wasn't the case, and in late 1996 the school was forced to close.

In Jack's brief stay at AME, apart from normal school work, he helped create a mediaeval village, learned some pottery, woodworking, and soldering, and went rock climbing and caving at Wee Jasper. We recall him demanding to go to school on a Saturday! We had no regrets about the time he spent there because his experience at AME was overwhelmingly positive, but we had to choose a new school. People told us that the government school closest in philosophy and atmosphere to AME was Cook Primary, which had itself undergone closure and subsequent re-opening.

Jack brought an AME approach to Cook Primary and got into trouble for climbing on the roof of the school and on the bus shelter, both activities having been totally acceptable at AME. "No-one told me I wasn't allowed to do that at this school."

One day, Kathy received a call from the Principal, starting with the words, "Don't worry, I've called an ambulance." It turned out that Jack's teacher had looked up to find that Jack had a large steel spring stuck in his eye. Fortunately, the sharp hook on the end of the spring was embedded in his eyelid rather than his eye.

Cook was a great school and Jack made a lot of good friends. Together they went on to attend Canberra High School and then to Hawker College.

¹https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/AME_School Accessed 19 July 2023.

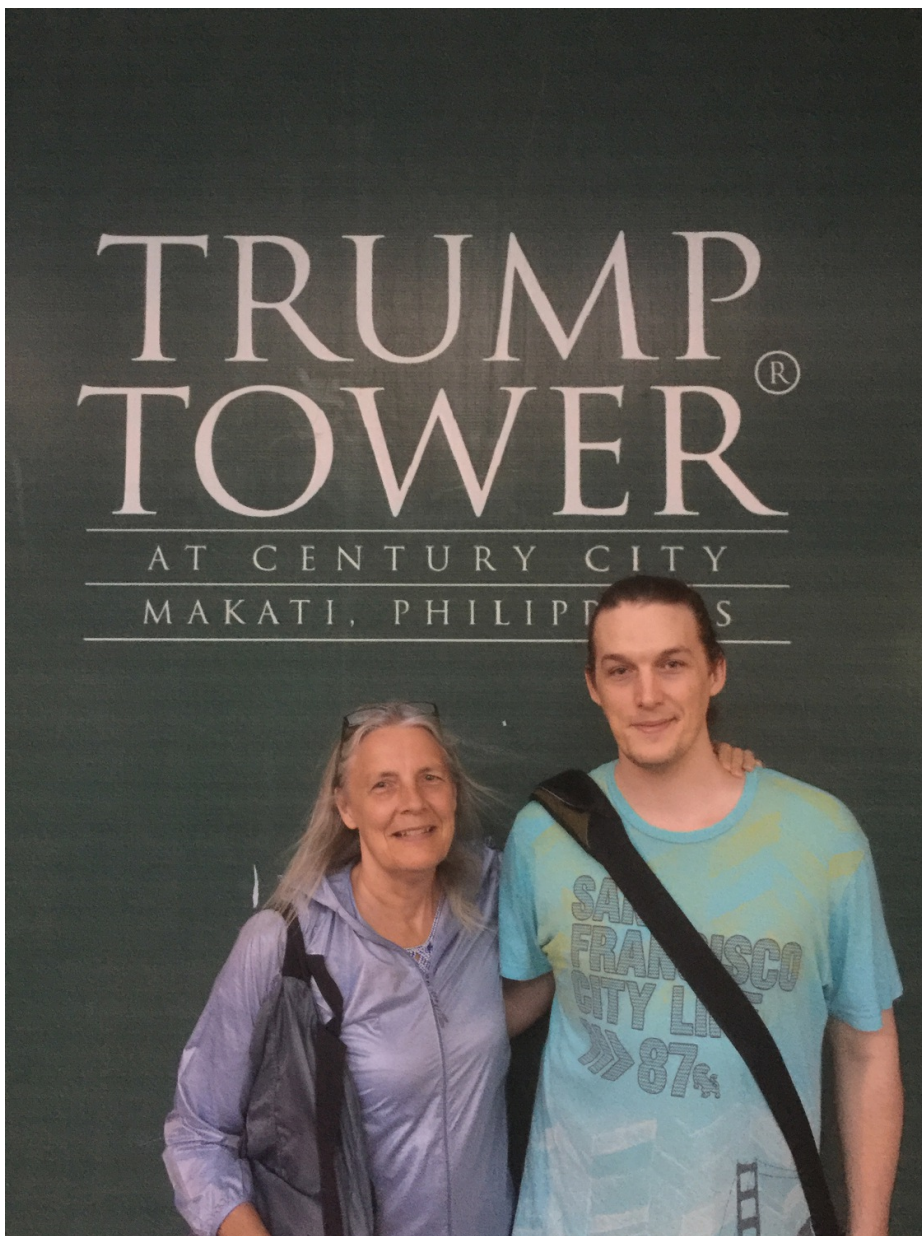
8.4 Asian influences

At creche, most of Jack's closest friends had an Asian parent. "Who do you want to invite to your birthday party, Jack?" – "Nicholas and Sean and Sophie and Sam." (Sophie being the only one without an Asian heritage.) At primary school, a Chinese girl invited him to her birthday party, the only non-Chinese guest. This affinity with Asian people continues to the present day.

When he had his first hair cut, the hairdresser Giuseppe Cataldo, founder of the Cataldos salon which has operated for more than 50 years in Canberra, asked blond, curly-headed Jack, how he'd like his hair. "I want it straight and black like my friend Sam." "Well I don't know whether we can do that." "Oh yes we can, there's this stuff in bottles."

At college, he played basketball with a Filipino team and also with an Indian team. "Who plays with you in the Indian team, Jack?" – "Rohit, Rajeev, Sanjay, Nitin, Paul," "Ah, Paul. So you're not the only non-Indian on the team." "Oh no, Paul's Indian too, but no-one can pronounce his real name."

Jack's first girlfriend (that we know about) Kim was a lovely Vietnamese girl, who achieved an ATAR score of 99.5, far higher than Jack's, and among the top handful in the ACT. She considered Jack to be very bright indeed.



2017: Meeting up with Jack in Manila. (We didn't stay in the Trump Tower!!!)

In around 2013, Jack came over to see us one Saturday morning and said, “Oh Dad, I’m going to the Philippines.” “OK. When are you going?” “In about an hour!” Rather shocked, I asked if he could possibly wait a little longer until Kathy returned from shopping.

When she returned, Kathy asked Jack for how long he was going and encouraged him to return in time to do the final unit he needed to complete his Software Engineering degree. Second semester started in three weeks. “Oh yes, I’m just going over to help set up computers for Jessie’s new start-up company in Manila. I’ll only have a 30-day tourist visa, so I’ll have to come back.” Five years later he returned to live in Canberra with his delightful Filipina girlfriend Erika, who is now his wife.

Those five years in the Philippines were something of a trial for Kathy and me, despite occasional visits home. We often had no idea where he was living or what he was doing, but sent pesos to him via Western Union. He relied on being able to fix up the problem of overstaying his 30-day visa by paying money on departure. We were all very upset one Christmas because at the airport he was told that this time he had exceeded the allowable overstay and would have to go to the main immigration office in Manila. It was shut for the holidays. He dejectedly walked home from the airport.

In January 2017, Kathy and I took a trip to Manila to visit Jack. There we met Erika, and discovered from her that, unknown to us, Jack was a successful DJ, playing in a prominent Manila night club and at festivals around the island of Luzon. These days he has a mass of DJ equipment but no longer performs publicly – that we know of!

While in Manila, we wanted to sort out Jack’s visa status. He had overstayed his visa by eighteen months, and we feared that he might end up in jail or be deported. We went with him to the local Immigration office in Makati but he was told he had to go to the main office. There we found that, in addition to paying a large fee, a notarised statutory declaration would be required. To our amusement, we found that just nearby there was a kind of lawyer’s market.

Under a large canvas cover, against the wall of a building, there were a considerable number of market stalls, each with a lawyer and the computer, scanner, and printer necessary to provide certified documents. Oh, and of course, there were cash registers.

It cost quite a bit, and we spent most of two days waiting in queues, but we did get the appropriate entries in Jack’s passport. Phew!

It struck us as amazing that Jack obviously enjoyed Manila. He had refused to consider attending university in Sydney or Wollongong, because those places were too hot and too humid! He was also a vegetarian and the Filipino diet is rather meat oriented.

He made friends with lots of interesting people in the Philippines, including a film star, and he went swimming at a ‘palace’ owned by a relative of the Sultan of Brunei. Since his visa (or lack thereof) didn’t allow him to work, he spent a lot of time learning new web and computer technologies. This stood him in good stead when he returned to Canberra.

8.5 Thursday nights in Civic

When Jack reached drinking age we soon realised that our proximity to Civic² and its night clubs was a two-edged sword. On one hand, Jack and his friends were easily able to walk into town and would not be tempted to drive while under the influence. On the other hand, it meant that Jack’s friends would gather at our house and return there in the early hours of the morning. We often found young men sleeping all around the house when we came down for breakfast.

Thursday was the favoured evening, because drinks were discounted that night. Mind you, it was still cheaper to preload on bottled drinks prior to the walk into Civic. On one particular evening of preloading, a very self-confident young man joined me in the bathroom³ without asking, while I was cleaning my teeth. He started looking at the containers beside the sink, held up one of them and commenced the following conversation:

²Downtown Canberra

³We only have one bathroom.

Visitor: Is this hair gel?’

Grumpy me: It could be, although it could be depilatory cream, ... or possibly anal lubricant.

He ignored my answer, and started applying the gel, carefully examining his appearance in the mirror and resuming our chat:

Visitor: Do you think this looks alright? I don’t want to look like a poof.

Grumpy me: Don’t worry, your secret is safe with me.

On returning to Jack’s room, he apparently said, “Jack, your Dad’s a mad c____”. Jack thinks that, for the person in question, it may have been a compliment!

Jack had a lot of close friends and they spent huge amounts of time playing computer games and magic cards. *World of Warcraft*, *CounterStrike*, and *Defence of the Ancients* were popular.

Geeks playing computer games are often derided as anti-social misfits interacting with machines in preference to people. We were pleasantly surprised to observe cooperation and close social interactions going on among the game players in Jack’s bedroom.

One of Jack’s good friends, Pat, took up almost full-time residence for many months, sleeping on Jack’s floor. We felt sorry for him, imagining that his home accommodation must be of even lower standard than a wooden floor in a cramped room. In reality it turned out that, at his real home, he had a whole floor of a comfortable house to himself with amenities such as a pool table.

One New Year’s Eve while Jack was in Manila, I heard noises in our back yard, and went out to investigate. It turned out to be two of Jack’s mates, Pat and Rohit, who had spent lots of time at our place. They had come to drink a beer in Jack’s honour. They offered me a can and of course I joined in.

8.6 Sport

It was suggested that Jack’s confidence would benefit from learning a martial art. We enrolled him in Yong ki-do, a mixture of better-known martial arts. The sensei was Shane Riordan and Jack showed considerable talent. Students in the class who were several years older were stunned when Jack showed he could land downward turning kicks on their shoulders.

Seniority in Shane’s class was determined by length of time in the class, rather than age or external role. After several years, Jack was sometimes the most senior student. It was quite impressive to see him running drills for adults, including a policeman and a teacher, when Shane took a phone call or was otherwise called away. “Hana, Dhul, Sehtt, Nehtt, ...”, counting in Korean.

Yong ki-do faded away for Jack when some members of the class pushed to compete in tournaments involving physical contact. Jack didn’t like hurting people and one of his female class mates boasted of breaking an opponent’s nose through a polycarbonate face shield. Another female broke her leg in training trying to deliver a kick to a man at least twice her weight.

Jack started playing a huge amount of other sport. At one stage while at UC he was in five teams: three basketball, one mixed netball, and one ultimate (frisbee). At the time I think he was also doing Brazilian Jiu Jitsu. He’s the only person I’ve ever seen slam-dunking a goal in netball. Jack and I played a couple of games together for the CMHR⁴ mixed netball team – what a shame Kathy couldn’t join us! In one game, a large middle-aged man on the opposing team was terrorising the lightly built women on our team. He played very roughly and showed no qualms about colliding with people half his weight.

Jack was bigger and stronger. He was standing rock still when the man crashed into him, bounced off and sprawled on the court with an aggrieved expression. The delight and gratitude from our team’s female members was palpable.

⁴Centre for Mental Health Research

8.7 Veganism

In 1998, Jack became a vegetarian. We were staying in Palm Cove, just north of Cairns, for the launch of Kathy's head injury book, and went to a nearby restaurant which turned out to feature buffalo, kangaroo, emu, and crocodile on the menu. Eleven-year-old Jack was in tears at the thought of people eating crocodiles, and decided then and there to no longer eat meat. Fortunately, the restaurant menu had a delicious vegetarian option, steamed in paper bark.

Back in Canberra, when he and his mates had pizzas delivered, Jack made all the meat lovers go outside to eat theirs.

In the Philippines he tightened his principles and became vegan. His motivation has always been the welfare and care of animals. Jack's first girlfriend's mother told us that Jack was superior to the Dalai Lama, since the Dalai Lama admitted that he would kill a fly.

8.8 Medical issues affecting high school

While at high school Jack suffered chronic illness and missed a huge amount of school time. A doctor did extensive blood tests and diagnosed a problem with his immune system. The symptoms seemed to us to be very like those of chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS) with which we were very familiar.

One summer day, I took Jack and Sam McGregor, then aged around ten, to Macquarie pool for a swim. I was sitting under a tree reading a book when Sam came running over to tell me that Jack had been stung on the foot by a bee and was in a bit of trouble. Discovering that he was swelling up all over, I put us in the car and drove as fast as I could to the nearby Calvary Hospital. By the time we got to Belconnen Way, Jack's voice was changing due to swelling in his airways. I contemplated running a red light but fortunately it changed. The emergency department gave him priority and soon had his anaphylaxis under control. Sam was very concerned and refused to leave his side until Jack had recovered.

We consulted an allergy specialist who had a rather eccentric manner; He and Jack got on very well. He confirmed that Jack had an allergic response to as little as one ten-thousandth of a bee sting, and immediately commenced a desensitisation program, increasing doses in small steps over a couple of days up to the equivalent of a full bee sting after a month. Once he was able to tolerate an injection of two bee stings, the allergist handed over to Jack's GP to run the rest of the program: 60 double-bee-sting injections, monthly for five years.

It's my belief that injected bee venom must cause quite a bit of pain, but Jack complained only once, when the GP injected deep into his muscle rather than subcutaneously. Having to line up for a monthly double bee sting is something few people would sign up for!

Illness and medical appointments caused Jack to miss a lot of classes and clearly had a detrimental effect on his results at high school and college. He did, however, produce some very high standard work. A notable example was a psychology essay which Psychologist Kathy thought was excellent.

In Jack's Year 11, Kathy had been interviewing graduate applicants for an IT role at the Centre for Mental Health Research. Disappointed by the field she came home and, out of curiosity, interviewed Jack, who out-performed the real applicants, despite having never studied computer science.

Jack has had quite a lot of medical treatment one way or another and has been very stoic about it. Most recently, he fell off his electric skateboard in the wet, and arrived home in obvious pain, but for quite a while resisted efforts to persuade him to go to hospital. It turned out that he had badly shattered his elbow. He was admitted to hospital for surgery to insert the screws and plates necessary to hold the five major pieces together.



8.9 Employment

By 2018, Jack and Erika were living in Canberra, in the granny flat in our back yard. Jack had been looking for work, but with an abnormal work history due to his five years in Manila, he wasn't in the best of positions.

That problem was solved in a very fortuitous way. In March that year, I retired and organised a retirement breakfast at the Margaret Whitlam Pavilion in the National Arboretum. I invited work colleagues from throughout my 50 year working career. One of them was Brett Matson, CEO of Funnelback, the small company of which I was the technical founder. Unknown to me, Brett and Jack fell into geekish conversation, and Brett was impressed with Jack's knowledge of web technologies I'd only vaguely heard of. He invited Jack in for a series of interviews. Jack started work in April 2018 and has worked for Funnelback and its parent company Squiz ever since.

8.10 Erika

We drove to Sydney airport as a welcome committee when Erika first arrived in Australia (with Jack) on a multi-entry tourist visa. The Australian environment is rather different to the Philippines but Erika seems to love it – particularly the farm in Euroa and the Snowy Mountains in winter.

Erika soon applied for a permanent partner visa. This was very expensive and the application process was onerous and intrusive. Over the succeeding five years she was granted:

- A bridging visa,
- A temporary visa,
- A permanent visa, and finally,
- Australian citizenship after making an affirmation at a citizenship ceremony late in 2022. She passed the citizenship questions, 20 out of 20. Hurrah!

Erika had to renounce her Philippines citizenship in order to apply for the Australian one, but once she's an Australian citizen she can apply again for her original citizenship. Huh???

Over the years in Canberra, she's gained a driver's licence and Medicare coverage, and she's had some poor dental work rectified.

She's an ideal Australian citizen, though her talents in marketing (she has a degree in Journalism) and business (she has experience in business in Manila) have yet to be taken advantage of by her new home. She is a very caring person and obtained an Aged Care certificate in order to work in aged care. Unfortunately, despite staff shortages in aged care, she was unable to find a permanent placement, or sufficient hours with a single employer. She has since worked in optometry and dental care.



October 2021: Jack and Erika's wedding, severely restricted by COVID-19 rules. Both Erika and Jack are very fond of dogs and consequently Nami and Pippa played important roles. Photos: Sally Witchalls.

Erika was under considerable pressure from her family to get married. Jack, like his parents, wasn't favourably disposed to formal marriage, but agreed because he loves her. He refused to spend large amounts of money on the celebrations. "But Jack, we'll pay for it." "No, it's not me being a tight-arse. I just don't want a whole lot of money to be wasted."

The wedding took place in our back yard in October 2021 under tight ACT COVID-19 restrictions – from memory, bride and groom, celebrant and five guests were allowed. Kathy and me, Georgia Tayler, Greg Battye and Siew-Gim McGregor were the guests.

Siew-Gim is Sam McGregor's mother. Harold once introduced Sam as Jack's creche friend, to which Jack responded, "No Grandad, he's my life friend."

Sam's father Peter contracted a horrible form of cancer, which was diagnosed as terminal during one of Jack's visits home. Jack remained in Canberra for weeks to support Sam until after Peter's funeral. He has clearly inherited his mother's caring instinct.

Sam was working in Hawaii at the time of the wedding but tuned into one of the live streams. The other live feed was watched by the Sta. Maria family in the Philippines.



A selection of Erika's paintings on display at her wedding in our back yard. She's very accurately depicted our cavoodle Pippa (top right) and their dog Nami (bottom left).

8.11 What can we say about Jack?

Jack's life path has been very different from any his parents would have imagined, but we are very proud of him. He's honest, intelligent, caring, very well informed on social, political and environmental issues, is highly principled, has a lovely wife and seems to care about us. He stands up for his principles. What parent could ask for better?

Chapter 9

Craft, Music, and Travel

Inheriting her mother's talent, Kathy has taken on a wide variety of different crafts: batik (with natural dyes from native plants), rug hooking, leather work, pottery, embroidery, tapestry, photography, mosaics, sewing, weaving, beading, and knitting. The best way to tell you about her efforts is surely through images, though there are some successful endeavours for which no photos exist.

Following in the Hamblin tradition, Kathy is a very competent pianist. Once, in about 1974, we were jointly babysitting in a house which had a nice piano. During the year or so we'd been living together and the eighteen months in Garran Hall before that, I'd never seen her at a piano, but she sat down and played for more than an hour – from complex pieces like Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto #1, to the honky tonk of *Alley Cat*. I was stunned. I particularly loved her playing of *Alley Cat* and have pestered her over the subsequent 48 years to play it just once more.¹



2019: A terracotta pot at Creighton II decorated by Kathy.

¹You can find an inferior version at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9fFf0ClVLao> Accessed 19 July 2023.



Kathy playing the Wertheim piano in our house in Turner. (Unfortunately not a Hamblin.) Pippa listens attentively, waiting, like me, for a rendition of *Alley Cat*.



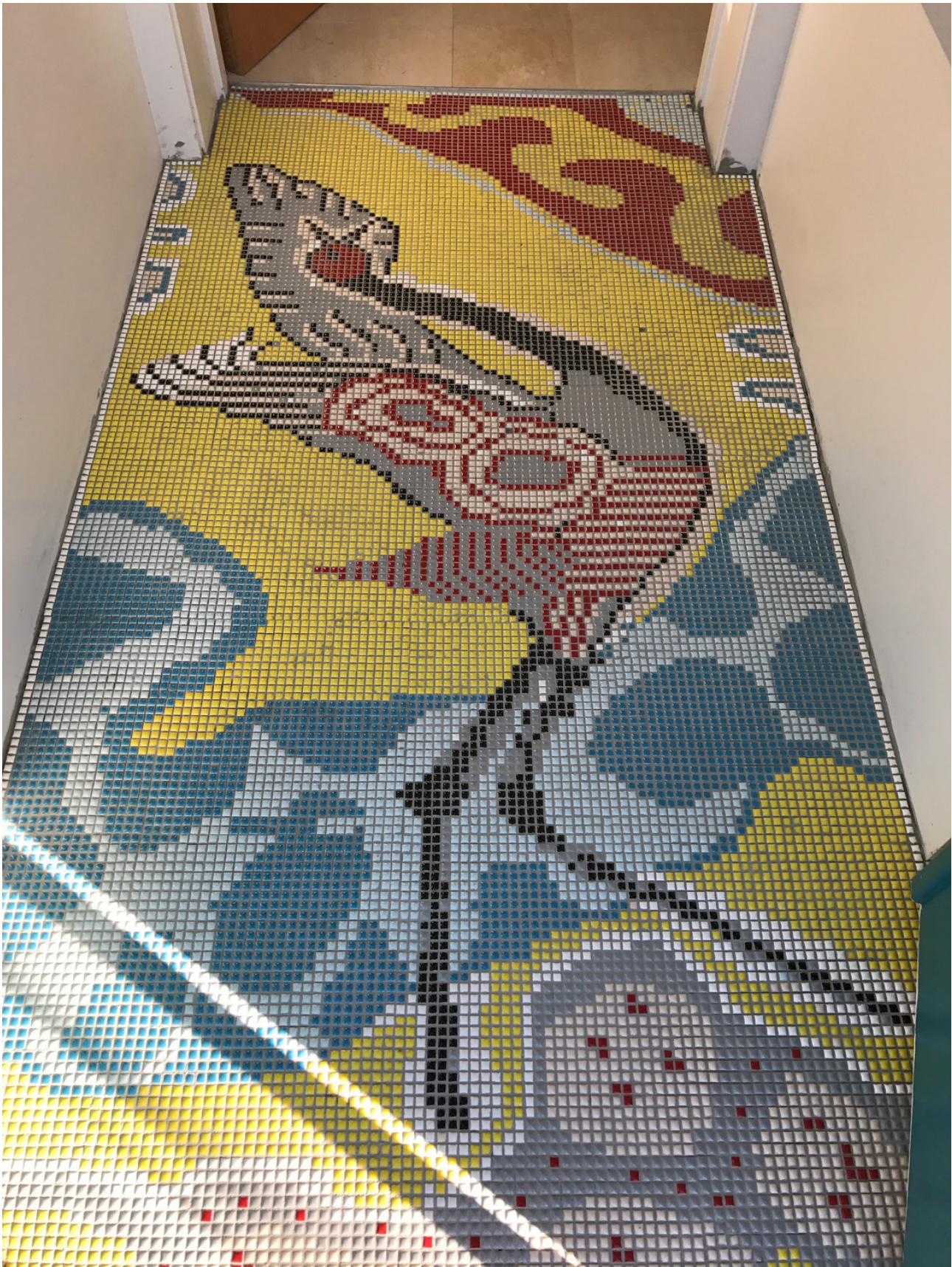
Pat and Kathy dressed up for brother John's second wedding. Kathy made her outfit herself.



A selection of items knitted by Kathy since her retirement. Nephew Theo's toy was for his St Patrick's Day birthday. The shawl is quite remarkable, don't you think?



Kathy bought a giant tapestry in Paris in 1985 and started work on it when we got home. Illness, parenthood and work got in the road but she finished it in 2021. It has since been beautifully framed and hangs in Creighton II.



2017: Brolga mosaic in the entry porch of Creighton II, designed and constructed by Kathy.



One of Kathy's many creative Christmas cards.



Left: A Kathy-made card for Michele, lover of Scots terriers. Right: Kathy recently made a Fair Isle jumper from oddments of wool accumulated since she was 16.

9.1 Travel

Kathy has always been interested in travel, and has become increasingly adventurous, willing to venture to places which made me rather uncomfortable.

9.1.1 Tasmania, 1974

Our first overseas trip was to Tasmania, in around 1974. We flew from Melbourne to Devonport and set up our cheap tent in a caravan park there. While in Devonport we visited our ANU friend Miranda Mellor (later Rawlinson) and her mother. We planned to travel onward to Hobart by train and strolled up to the railway station to ask when trains for Hobart departed. The man in the ticket office gasped and said, “It’s on the platform now and the next one is in two days time!” We hastily bought tickets and dashed across the platform, plonking ourselves down in the carriage.

I don’t know what you’re hurrying for mate. It takes 6 hours to get to Hobart.

“Ha ha, good joke”, we thought. It can’t take 6 hours to cover 250km! Surely it can’t.

It did take 6 hours, but the journey on the *Tasman Limited* was a very pleasant experience. The scenery was lovely and the standard of service was at the highest level. Cream teas and lunch with apple cider were delivered to you at your seat. Wikipedia² tells me that the crew would book a taxi for you or heat up a bottle of baby milk. The train manager announced stations and used an unfamiliar pronunciation for one of them:

We will shortly be arriving at Latrobe, named after Governor Latrobe.

Then there was the excitement of the Western Junction, where carriages from Launceston were hitched onto the *Tasman Limited* with much shunting back and forth.

We enjoyed the sights of Hobart and surrounds, including Port Arthur, but didn’t much enjoy our stay in the caravan park near Wrest Point casino. Rain water flooding down the slope during the night penetrated first the seams of our crummy tent, and then our sleeping bags.

9.1.2 A circular tour of northern and western Australia

In 1982, we found that Ansett and Qantas offered ‘circular’ airfares, which allowed you to pick a handful of destinations and loop them together with flights. You could choose when you flew each leg but you had to begin and end the journey at the same place and always move forward around the loop.

We chose to loop around Alice Springs, Darwin, Kununurra, Broome, and Perth, starting in early September. Kathy was very tired and not very well when we left the cold of Canberra, but sprang to exuberant life within minutes of landing in 30C temperatures at Alice Springs. She loved the place, and revelled in warmth for the rest of the journey until we landed in Perth.

We took a trip with a then-dominant bus company to Uluru and Kings Canyon. At that stage, Uluru was called Ayers Rock, you were encouraged to climb it, and we stayed in a motel only about 50 metres from its base. Along the way, the bus pulled off the track to let us experience nature, and got stuck in loose sand. Our driver Alan tried to radio but no-one responded. He tried the bull bag³ but was unable to free the bus. He and I went off and found a log to put under the wheels but that didn’t work either.

The problem was that the bus had a lazy axle at the very rear. It was sitting up high, preventing the inboard driving wheels from gaining traction. The bus didn’t have a shovel so Kathy and I flattened a soft drink can and used it to excavate under the lazy axle. After a while the driving wheels were able to bite and we drove out. In the hour or two that we were there, no other vehicle came past. Says Kathy:

²https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tasman_Limited Accessed 19 July 2023.

³A large heavy duty bag that you put under the rear of a vehicle and inflate using the vehicle exhaust.

Actually, except for one lovely older woman, it was clear that they disapproved of me helping. One woman remarked to the effect that, “these things are better left to the men.” It’s different now, but back then we were 150km from the nearest station or civilisation and there was a definite possibility that we could have been stranded out there all night. The other passengers – apart from the lovely older woman who quietly looked for more tin cans – seemed entirely oblivious to this prospect.

At dinner that night at Wallara Ranch, I (not Kathy!) was hailed as a hero, and invited to drop in to the Cessnock Bowls Club anytime I wanted. One of my elderly admirers said, “You know Alan has admitted that he has aboriginal blood. It’s wonderful how they come good after a few generations!” I was so stunned and appalled that I only managed to reply with, “what!!!!”.

Another bus trip to the West MacDonnell ranges also attracted a predominantly older clientele. Kathy and I jumped off the bus at most of the gorges along the way and dived in for a quick swim.

In 1991, we went on a camping holiday to Central Australia with Jack. I’ve written about that on Page 100. We found that, in just nine years, the isolation and adventure of Central Australian travel had been overwhelmed by an army of tourists, and the infrastructure to support them: kerbed roads and parking spots, hotels, and vast camping resorts. Vehicles are everywhere and swimming is no longer permitted in some of the water holes. ☺

Our next stop was Darwin and we arranged a two day camping trip with Dial-a-Safari. The driver was a wonderful character who encouraged flexibility in time-keeping by announcing that every destination would be reached, “about ha’past’.”⁴ First stop was breakfast of tropical fruit grown in the Dial-a-Safari garden at Humpty Doo. We found the Adelaide River War Cemetery moving, and enjoyed cruises in Katherine Gorge and the East Alligator River. Kathy’s absolute favourite was Mataranka on Elsey Station, the subject of *We of the never never* by Jeannie Gunn. It wasn’t the graves of people from the book, or the fielders in a game of cricket, each standing beside a Darwin stubby,⁵ but rather the Mataranka Thermal Pool which really appealed to Kathy. She’s not a mad keen swimmer but she LOVED Mataranka. Crystal clear water at above 30C, gushing out fast enough to give your back a strong massage, in a large pool surrounded by paper barks. A total sensory experience!

On the second half of our tour we were unfortunately joined by a family from the Torres Strait. I’ve written about it previously in another book:⁶

Among our companions in the back of a four-wheel-drive troop carrier was a lady who we privately christened Mrs Ha-Ha. She wore Edna Everidge butterfly-shaped spectacles and there was an unbreakable link between her brain and her voice box; Everything she thought she said aloud. “I’m going to put on my socks. They’re nice socks, these cotton ones. My sister works in Target. That’s the place to buy socks. Of course, I didn’t buy these ones there. ...” If you were her chosen conversation partner she would place her face a few centimetres from yours and turn on a long playing record. Just in case you might spoil things by allowing a second or two of silence, she answered her own questions and kept up your end of the conversation as well.

One of her stories concerned a bus tour in which the passengers failed to get on with each other to such an extent that their driver had been compelled to call on the driver of a second bus to help break up a fight. What we couldn’t believe was that Mrs Ha-Ha claimed to have been on the second bus! In the end we resorted to communicating with each other in sign language. So oblivious was she to the reactions of those around her that she failed to notice.

Camped for the night at Koolpin gorge, we could have woken to the sound of the bird population. Instead we woke to the sound of Mrs Ha-Ha complaining of the discomforts of camping, and her son’s radio. Her husband added to the popularity of the family by stirring up a green ants’ nest in the leaves above a trail we had to walk down.

The leg after Darwin was Kununurra. The day was super hot and when we walked through Hidden Valley with the sun blazing down and reflecting off the rocks, I was sunburned through my

⁴Half past some unspecified hour!

⁵A bottle containing a large volume of beer. 2.2 litres?

⁶<https://david-hawking.net/books/5Ideas.pdf> Accessed 19 July 2023.

cotton shirt! In Kununurra we hired a car, cruised Lake Argyle, and caught a glimpse of the Bungle Bungles. In an unsuccessful attempt to reduce the exorbitant cost of an airport transfer, we booked a taxi to the Diversion Dam, had a swim there, and walked to the airport.

Arriving in Broome, we noted the telephone boxes with Asian roofs, and the defunct Garuda aircraft being used as the Tourist Bureau. We marvelled at the huge tidal range and passed up the opportunity to acquire a few pearls. It seemed so cool after Kununurra that we really enjoyed an 11km return walk to Cable Beach – it was in fact 39C!



Kathy in Tasmania in 1974, complete with enormous backpack.

9.1.3 'Holidays' in Europe

In the early days, Kathy and I made three trips to Europe (1979, 1982, and 1985) which I have described in my book, *Europe on Five Ideas a Day*⁷, and will only briefly touch on here.

In 1979, Kathy spent most of the time working at the National Neurological Diseases Hospital in Maida Vale, but we did spend a week with Pam and Gordon in Leiden, Netherlands, and a few days in Paris.

For Kathy 1982's trip was also a little blighted by work. She had just submitted her PhD thesis, was meeting one of her examiners, and there was the possibility, fortunately unrealised, that she might have had to submit to an oral examination in Britain. We still managed to have some great times in Switzerland, Norway, Sweden, the Netherlands (this time Pam and Gordon were living in Utrecht) and Cornwall.

The trip in 1985 was pure holiday. We obtained a car in Paris and drove around France for seven weeks, starting with a couple of weeks in the alps. Kathy's health seemed to have mended⁸ and she walked like a champion. She loved the marmots we saw in the alps!



Kathy celebrates her arrival at the top of the Col de la Masse (elevation 2903m), in Vanoise National Park, 1250m above the start of the walk in Aussois. I was lying exhausted on the ground.

⁷<https://david-hawking.net/books/5Ideas.pdf> Accessed 19 July 2023.

⁸Only temporarily unfortunately.

9.1.4 Work travel

After that Kathy's pre-retirement travel was for work, and sometimes one of us would accompany the other on a work trip. I travelled with her to Istanbul; Toronto; Lansing, MI; and Tromsø in Norway. She travelled with me to Santiago in Brasil, to Champéry in Switzerland, to Pisa, Italy and to London.

It happened that both of us were selected to attend an event in Chiang Mai, Thailand. We were finalists in separate categories in an international competition for our respective work. We loved the experience except when we were kidnapped by the driver of a songthaew (red truck). We engaged him to take us to our hotel, but he drove us in the opposite direction with us banging on the bars to try to make him stop the truck. Fortunately it turned out that the kidnapping was only temporary and that he had driven us to an art gallery to earn a commission from the gallery owner.

Because of our joint work on measuring the quality of health information on the web we also jointly attended a seminar/meeting in Geneva with Celia Boyer and her team. Celia is the Executive Director of the Health on the Net foundation.

Our week in Tromsø was fascinating – it's well inside the Arctic Circle and we were there for the summer solstice. The telemedicine conference which Kathy attended organised a picnic beside the fjord where the German battleship Tirpitz was sunk in World War II. Since there was broad daylight for 24 hours each day, we were able to do lots of tourist things, including taking a cable car to a nearby mountain, visiting the arctic botanic gardens, and enjoying the dramatic Arctic Cathedral.

One day we signed up for a tour to Skjervøy⁹ and back, bus one way and the Hurtigruten coastal ferry on the way back, spectacular scenery all the way. The Hurtigruten boat seemed enormous. We stepped from the wharf into a lift which took us up eight decks and made our way to the enormous glass-fronted viewing lounge for four hours of beautiful ice and water scenery. Unfortunately it looked as though many of the passengers in the lounge had died, since they remained motionless for the whole time we were with them



2014: Cala Deià, Mallorca

⁹Pronounced sharrvay.

Kathy travelled quite a bit with Helen Christensen, jointly attending conferences and working on scientific collaborations in the Netherlands, the UK and the US. As appropriate to their station, in London Helen booked an apartment just down the road from Buckingham Palace, and booked a limousine from Washington DC to Charlottesville, Virginia. While in California, Kathy loved their trip to Yosemite, but wasn't anywhere near as keen as Helen on the retail opportunities of Rodeo Drive, Beverly Hills.

On one trip by herself, Kathy combined work meetings in Heidelberg and Leipzig with a brief holiday with Georgia Tayler and her family in Languedoc and Barcelona. She became a great fan of Gaudi. Travelling from Leipzig to Narbonne by rail required several tight connections. The least certain was the one in the enormous station at Strasbourg. From Canberra, I was able to monitor the live train arrival information and tell Kathy the destination platform of the incoming train, and webcams showed me the layout of all of the station, except the one from which the Narbonne train departed! Yes, there was a TGV service direct from Strasbourg to Narbonne, skirting Paris.

In 2013 (?), Kathy's work required week long stays in the USA and then Europe, with a week in between. It would have been stupid and expensive to return to Australia, and I encouraged her to take a week's holiday in Bermuda. Despite Bermuda being 'half way' between North America and Europe, it was difficult to arrange the necessary flights. Instead Kathy flew to Europe and took a brief holiday in Mallorca. She loved it, the warmth, the landscape, and the culture. A year later she persuaded me and my sisters Michele and Jenny to join her on a proper holiday there and took great delight in showing us around the delights she had previously discovered.

For Kathy's post-retirement travels, please see Chapter 13.

Chapter 10

CMHR

Kathy started volunteering as a Visiting Fellow at the Centre for Mental Health Research (CMHR) in the mid 1990s. As noted elsewhere, CMHR had previously been known as the Social Psychiatry Research Unit (SPRU). A Principal Research Fellow at SPRU until his death in 1987 was Paul Duncan-Jones who, in an odd twist of fate, was a previous owner of our house in Turner.

Kathy's initial connection with CMHR came through a student she was supervising on a topic related to Alzheimers. Kathy asked Helen Christensen from CMHR, an expert in ageing, to be a co-supervisor.

Having established a working relationship, Kathy and Helen then carried out a meta-analysis¹ of the effect of depression on cognitive ability. That was a huge job involving the analysis of more than 500 papers. Next, Kathy worked as a research assistant on a project of Helen's which assessed the cognitive abilities of elderly academics. Kathy enjoyed going to interview these people, who were Australia's most eminent scientists and researchers, all fellows of the Australian Academies of Science, Social Science or Humanity

When Kathy arrived at CMHR most of its mental health research was focused on exploring the nature of psychiatric disorders by means of interviews and survey research. Asked by Helen Christensen if she wanted to collaborate on this research, Kathy responded that she was much more interested in investigating interventions that might make a positive difference to mental health. In line with this interest, while a Visiting Fellow, Kathy wrote an unsuccessful NHMRC grant application seeking funding to develop and evaluate an automated online intervention for depression (later to be known as MoodGYM).

Although that application was unsuccessful, the project was subsequently funded as part of a successful bid led by then Director Tony Jorm for an NMHRC Program Grant which funded CMHR's research. Kathy wrote a section of the grant application and was an Associate Investigator on the grant.

Kathy's first paid employment at CMHR was in 2000 as a part-time Business Development Manager. Between 2001 and 2001 she was a full-time Research Coordinator (Fellow, Level C), a role which combined business development with academic research. Kathy is very grateful to Scott Henderson, Tony Jorm, and Helen Christensen for their support in establishing her career in mental health research. In 2004, she was promoted to Associate Professor, and in 2008, to Professor, and Deputy Director of CMHR. She became Director of the Centre in 2012.

In her application for the position of Business Development Manager Kathy listed a number of goals which she wanted to achieve to boost the profile and funding of the Centre. She is proud that all were achieved.

10.1 Australian Foundation for Mental Health Research

One of the goals was to create a foundation to increase long-term funding of CMHR's activities.

¹A meta-analysis attempts to overcome limitations of individual research studies, by aggregating the data from a large number of studies and analysing the combined data. Meticulous work is needed to correctly combine the data sets.

Particularly in the area of mental health, some people have a strong desire to donate money to support research, but fear that a donation to the university generally will not necessarily reach the right area. Relatives of someone who has suicided may be strongly motivated to progress research in mental health, but not to support a university as a whole.



Kathy receiving an award from the Australasian Society for Psychiatric Research.² Photographer unknown.



The Board of the Foundation for Mental Health Research. Kathy is at left in the middle row. Senate President Margaret Reid is at right in the front row. Photographer unknown.

²Now known as the Society for Mental Health Research (SMHR). <https://www.smhr.org.au/history-of-aspr-and-smhr> Accessed 19 July 2023.

Kathy and Helen Christensen worked to form the Australian Foundation for Mental Health Research, later known as AFFIRM, drawing on Helen's contacts in Canberra's business community. In January 2003, Kylie Bennett, with a degree in astrophysics, joined CMHR as Promotions Officer and, as part of that role, worked to set up the foundation. She later became part-time Executive Officer. Kathy commissioned designs for logos and branding. Senator Margaret Reid, then President of the Australian Senate, chaired the foundation.

The foundation organised highly successful fund-raising events. Among these, *Gourmet in the Gardens* attracted 400 paying customers to the National Botanic Gardens, with excellent catering provided free by top Canberra restaurants. CMHR and foundation directors did an amazing job of setting up and decorating the tables. That was followed by a cocktail event (*Art for Answers*) at Gandel Hall at the National Gallery of Australia, at which donated art works were profitably auctioned. Another was held on the terrace at Old Parliament House.



2004: Gourmet in the Gardens, a very successful Foundation for Mental Health Research fund-raising event held in the National Botanic Gardens. Helen Christensen is at front right across from her then husband Iain Dunlop. The meandering line of tables accommodated around 400 people who each paid a considerable sum for the privilege. A silent auction prompted some people to open their wallets very wide. My \$500 bid for Grange Hermitage was only about 10% of the amount required.

The foundation raised large amounts of money, and was able to support a research fellowship. It was set up under ANU auspices to support ANU research in mental health, but with Helen Christensen's departure to Sydney, the board decided to broaden its scope, supporting mental health research in Melbourne, Sydney and ANU.

10.2 Later fund raising

As Director of the recently named National Institute for Mental Health Research, Kathy was acutely aware of the need to generate funding to support research and deliver outcomes. An ANU report on fund raising in gives an insight into what went on and photos illustrate the diversity of fund raising activities.

2015 Day of Giving

On Wednesday 7 October, during National Mental Health Awareness Week, the ANU Community came together with a goal of raising \$50,000 for The National Institute for Mental Health Research (NIMHR) at ANU.

NIMHR represents the best and brightest of ANU – conducting world-class research that has direct impact improving the lives of millions across the globe. To date, more than one million people from over 222 nation states around the world have accessed its online self-help programs.

More than 470 donors gave to the inaugural Day of Giving Campaign, helping to raise in excess of \$40,000. The Bruce Hall community also donated \$10,000 from its Protect Your Head Campaign, helping to reach the \$50,000 target.

Two generous donors provided a matched gift taking the overall total of the campaign to \$100,905.

President of the Bruce Hall Residents Committee Jamon Shay, was pleased that the Hall's fundraising throughout the year would make a significant impact.

"Our goal through the Tour de Bruce, a 500km ride from Dubbo to Canberra, was to not only raise funds for mental health research, but also raise awareness of the impact mental illness has among the wider ANU community. Thanks to the matched gift, the Bruce Hall community was able to double our contribution in support of mental health research at ANU," said Jamon.



NIMHR Director, Professor Kathy Griffiths was delighted with the outcome.

"The support shown by the wider ANU community reflects the broad impact that mental illness has on so many people's lives," Professor Griffiths said.

"NIMHR is so grateful to everyone who supported the campaign, especially the two anonymous donors who generously provided a matched gift. The funds raised will ensure that NIMHR continues to lead the way in mental health research that is translated into programs that make a real difference to lives of people around the world."

From *The Impact of Giving. 2015 ANU Report to Donors.*³ Accessed 19 July 2023.

³<https://www.anu.edu.au/files/document-collection/2015Report.pdf>



August 2015: A group of NIMHR people running the City2Surf to raise funds for mental health research. Kathy herself completed the 14 kilometre journey. Photo: Kathy



ANU students fund-raising for ANU Philanthropy's Day of Giving for NIMHR. \$100,000 was raised. Photo: Kathy



Raising funds and awareness on the ANU campus. Amelia Gulliver, Lou Farrer, and Kathina Ali. Photo: Kathy

10.3 Consumer Research Unit (CRU)

Many consumers of mental health services have strong views on treatments and gaps in knowledge. They have lived experience in the area while most professionals do not. Their views on priorities in the mental health area may differ sharply from those of practitioners.

In the early 2000s Kathy wrote a proposal to set up a depression and anxiety consumer research unit (DACRU, later known as CRU), and Tony Jorm submitted it to *beyondblue*. This proposal was considered quite controversial by some medically oriented professionals – “Isn’t that like getting passengers to fly a plane?” Someone in HR thought it was like getting robbers to run a bank.

Funding for a short period of operation was obtained from *beyondblue* and Kathy became the Director of the new unit, a role she retained until her retirement. After the initial funding ran out, Tony Jorm funded it for a period from the CMHR budget. Kathy subsequently submitted a tender to run an ACT Government consumer and carer research unit, recommended by Stephen Rosenberg in a review of mental health services in the Australian Capital Territory. From then on CRU incorporated ACACIA: The ACT Consumer & Carer Mental Health Research Unit.

CRU organised well-attended talks and discussion sessions for the Canberra public, bringing to Canberra leading researchers in fields ranging from insomnia and eating disorders to suicide.

Kylie Bennett says that CRU was a really innovative initiative which challenged traditional research methods and had great academic impact.

Michelle Banfield has worked in CRU (now known as the Lived Experience Research Unit) for many years.

Reflections from Michelle Banfield, Head of Lived Experience Research Unit, CMHR, ANU.

If it weren’t for Kathy’s leadership and vision in creating CRU, I would not be where I am now. I feel like my own career is something of a series of happy accidents, starting with discovering that the Centre for Mental Health Research had a thing called the Consumer Research Unit, and there was the opportunity for me to be a research assistant who brought their lived

experience of mental health issues into their research role. From the first time I met Kathy at a job interview, I was struck by her warmth and welcome. I genuinely wanted to work with her, and I loved the idea that my experience as a mental health consumer was a unique qualification for the job.

Over the course of the past 19 years, I have watched lived experience involvement in research shift from something of an empty policy with little structure behind it, to being something expected for methodologically sound health research. I guess “watched” is not really the right word, as it comes with a whole lot of shoving from people like Kathy and me. Kathy was one of the pioneers in this space, pursuing the idea of academic consumer researchers at a time when open identification was even more of a risk than it is now. Academic research is fertile ground for stigma and discrimination, and carries more than its fair share of challenges as a career for those who are not also experiencing mental health issues. Having a supervisor and mentor who modelled being yourself in spaces despite the risks and challenges really set me up to push boundaries much further as the research sector was forced to shift.

Kathy also imparted a deep appreciation of research integrity, ethics and privacy. I carry that baton as a current Research Integrity Advisor, and have been invited to be the next chair of the ANU Human Research Ethics Committee. Again, this is a path that came about through discussions Kathy’s mentorship fostered: I had the knowledge and conviction to question some stigmatising remarks on an ethics protocol, which led me to join the ethics committees and quickly progress into leadership roles in that space. She also encouraged my natural tendency to pursue things to the last detail, which is a useful thing when privacy principles and research integrity are involved.

The other area where I think Kathy has influenced my own work is through her approach to supervision and team leadership. There are some unique challenges that come with leading a team who all have identified lived experience, either as consumers and/or carers. Kathy and I learned a lot together about navigating these spaces. I felt great appreciation at the time, but even more so now as I am the person on whom everything falls.

Comments on value of consumer research from Sebastian Rosenberg, then Deputy Director, Mental Health Council of Australia

I met Kathy when working at the (then) Mental Health Council of Australia in the mid 2000s. She was active as a consumer advocate. I had met many such advocates, all toiling to address the structural imbalance, unfairness even cruelty which unfortunately still characterizes large segments of Australia’s mental health system.

Kathy was different however in that she recognized very early on the value in systematising consumer knowledge to generate the power necessary to effectively address unfairness. This meant moving beyond awareness raising, storytelling or asking for more community understanding. It meant conducting hard, respectable and reliable research, building ways to organize the valid, broad collection of consumer experiences.

In this respect I saw Kathy as a pioneer in the nascent field of consumer mental health research. She built a unique skill set of tools and approaches that permitted Australia to finally start to capitalize on this hitherto untapped resource - the validated collection of the experiences of mental health consumers for the purpose of systematic reform.

She then presented and published her work, as any academic would, in the hope it would provoke positive change. She often worked in successful collaborations, with other researchers and with health professionals. To my mind, this is the wellspring for reform. Kathy’s role in legitimizing the role of consumers as professional academic researchers is well worthy of recognition.

10.4 Contribution to aviation safety

In 2007, Kathy worked with Dr James Ross, a Medical Officer in the Royal Australian Air Force, to address the important policy issue of whether pilots should be allowed to work when taking antidepressants. A line of reasoning apparently taken by the US Federal Aviation Authority was that: “Depressed pilots may pose a safety risk and should not be allowed to fly aircraft. If you take antidepressants you must be depressed.”

To quote from Kathy’s CV:

Research undertaken with Dr James Ross on the effect of antidepressants on civil aviation safety demonstrated that antidepressant use was not associated with adverse safety outcomes. There was however a trend towards increased incidents among pilots prior to commencing antidepressant treatment. At the time of the study most international jurisdictions except Australia prohibited the use of antidepressants by pilots. The findings resulted in a change of the US Federal Aviation Authority licensing laws for pilots and has informed civil aviation safety policy in Australia.

The resulting paper won the Tuttle Award from the American Society of Aerospace Medicine for the paper contributing most to solving an issue in aerospace medicine in 2007.

10.5 Role of IT in mental health research

Very early on Kathy saw the importance of having IT expertise on hand when working with online information services, online interventions and online research. With some background in Computer Science herself, Kathy was able to understand IT projects and realised that technical details could be critical.

Kathy and Helen brought in David Berriman from ANU’s Corporate Information Services (CIS) team to build a more capable and robust version of MoodGYM after deficiencies in the first version, based on shopping cart software, became apparent. David Berriman was seconded for a period to CMHR. In 2003 Kathy also recruited IT specialist Anthony Bennett to work on other online projects.⁴

Later, when CIS management became unwilling to continue supporting the MoodGYM service, Anthony took on its maintenance and development. Anthony’s employment was funded by the DHAC grant.

10.6 DHAC funding of online mental health interventions

Since 2008, DHAC has funded an ANU research grant with Kathy as CIA (first Chief Investigator). It funded the operation of online services BluePages, MoodGYM, e-Couch, and BlueBoard, and research into their effectiveness. BluePages⁵ was and still is a depression information site. MoodGYM and e-Couch which have been discussed elsewhere deliver online mental health interventions. BlueBoard was a moderated mental health consumer health forum.

Moderation of BlueBoard was essential to ensure the safety of all.

Claire Kelly and subsequently, over an extended period, Michelle Banfield, were the original moderators with oversight from Kathy. Occasionally Kathy would moderate BlueBoard herself, and I remember her performing that task on at least one Christmas Day.

Later it was decided to hire moderators from within the consumer population. They were trained and supervised by Julia Reynolds, an outstanding CMHR clinical psychologist. Moderators located in regional areas were brought to Canberra for training and refresher workshops.

Many people value consumer support forums but little was known about whether they improved the mental health of users. Kathy obtained an NMHRC grant to undertake a rigorous study of the

⁴Arriving soon after Kylie, Anthony and Kylie shared an office and got on very well. A few years later they married and became business partners as well.

⁵<https://bluepages.anu.edu.au/> Accessed 19 July 2023.

effectiveness of consumer support forums (i.e. modeled on BlueBoard) and found that there was a demonstrable benefit. Brad Carron-Arthur and a CSIRO research team both studied communication networks within BlueBoard.

10.7 Ethics

Despite an already crushing workload, between 2009 and 2016, Kathy served as an ANU Research Integrity Advisor. According to ANU's web page⁶, "Research Integrity Advisors provide advice regarding the responsible conduct of research and the University's research integrity procedures to all University students and staff members." Kathy, with her very well-developed commitment to fairness, honesty, and doing the right thing, was a very appropriate appointment to this role.

10.8 Presentations

Like me, Kathy becomes very nervous prior to making public presentations. However, to effectively carry out her various roles she has made dozens (probably hundreds) of presentations to a very wide range of audiences – to academic conferences, funding agencies, governments, international delegations, mental health and suicide prevention audiences, and the general public. She's become an effective, passionate, and engaging speaker.



2009: Kathy presenting at Old Parliament House, Canberra. Photographer unknown.

⁶<https://services.anu.edu.au/research-support/ethics-integrity/responsible-research-practice/research-integrity-advisors> Accessed 19 July 2023.



Launch of BluePages in the ANU Vice-Chancellor's Office: From left: Tony Jorm, CMHR Director; Kay Patterson, Federal Health Minister; Kathy. Photo: ANU Photography Unit.



Launch of MoodGym: Our son Jack (right) and his good friend Sam McGregor. Photographer unknown.

10.9 Directorship

There was a great deal of disruption when Helen Christensen departed in late 2011. Ageing research split off into the Centre for Research on Ageing, Health and Wellbeing with Kaarin Anstey as Director. Kathy took over as Director of CMHR and continued to lead the Consumer Research Unit and Ehuh.

Kathy had not sought the role of Director and would have preferred that Helen stayed. However, once in the position she worked hard to grow the profile of the centre and to increase its impact in the community. She tried to inspire staff and students to achieve and to deliver impact.

Kylie Bennett comments on Kathy's leadership style.

Kathy's leadership style was one of quiet determination, but with a fierce commitment to equity, inclusiveness and fairness. She led by example, advocating for and including lived experience perspectives in all aspects of implementation projects and mental health research.

One of her innovations was the awarding of a medal for research into mental health – Scott Henderson was the first recipient. After Kathy's retirement ANU medals were no longer awarded but the idea was taken up by UNSW. Kathy also created a system in which depression sufferers could register with the Centre to comment on the research it was conducting and to find out about public events in the area of mental health.



2015: Scott Henderson receives the Mental Health Research Award from Kathy. Photo: Kate Presst.⁷

CMHR included several members who were themselves mental health consumers. Kathy spent considerable time and effort supporting them, and dealing with 'people problems'. Most offices were shared and there was a surprising amount of conflict over temperatures in rooms, and, "I don't want to share an office with X."

Fiona Hurley, CMHR Business Manager during Kathy's directorship.

What I can talk about is the way Kathy went about the day to day running of the Centre and her attitude to the staff. She always tried to accommodate the needs of the staff where she

⁷<https://www.anu.edu.au/news/all-news/mental-health-research-pioneer-honoured-by-anu> Accessed 19 July 2023.

could. She could see the emotional needs and at times also their physical needs, and so did her best to try for a positive resolution for everyone, be it work equipment, settling disputes, supporting a parent to make home life an easier fit with work requirements. Any number of things in between.

There were a lot of 'complex' personalities that required juggling to get a result and not everyone saw the intention behind some of the battles that went on behind the scenes. I did, and was often left amazed at the effort that went into managing people both up, down, and sideways on the employment scale. It was at times a pretty tough time for Kathy as they introduced more and more changes (and not all for the best) but she always worked diligently and absolutely tirelessly to try for the best outcomes. It had to be admired. This attitude often came at an expense to her and at times took a personal toll.

Another thing that stood out to me, was that people were always treated the same regardless of the level they were at, and the same energy went into achieving what she could. This was something that affected me personally and I was always grateful for that respect and support.

I do remember a funny little thing. We decided to have a pyjama day to lighten things and enjoy the comfort of it. Kathy (who confessed to not owning such a garment), rocked up in a pair of black tights and a black shirt of sorts. At about 10am a delegation from one of the government departments arrived (in their best suits and high heels and all very well made up) to go over the results of some research that she had been supervising, with the intention of deciding whether or not to re-fund the study. Kathy had completely forgotten about the meeting! After a short moment of embarrassment, a quick explanation of why she was dressed as she was, and quite a bit of laughter, the meeting went ahead, and from memory the project was re-funded. That is Kathy.

Kathy successfully argued for the appointment of a Deputy Director and John Cunningham, an Australian then working in Canada, was appointed.

Kylie and Anthony Bennett remember Kathy being incredibly busy but being willing to make time for anyone who needed it. They remember her as being gentle and mild – Kylie says she was probably "too bloody nice."

She was however capable of being fierce when arguing for worthy causes or addressing injustices. Anthony remember her infectious laughter filling the corridor but he was shocked when he heard her swearing for the first time.

Anthony Bennett remembers some intemperate language.

It was early in my days at CMHR, and represented the first time I recall hearing the ever mild-mannered Kathy swear, enough that I remember it!

I went to her office (with a question I probably knew the answer to) and asked if the Goldberg anxiety scale was supposed to have nine questions. She confirmed it did, with a suspicious, "Why do you ask?" I told her that on Bluepages there were only eight. She opened the site up and started counting "1, 2, 3, 4, 5, ... FUCK!"

Anthony loved it when Kathy chilled out and remembers her drinking large volumes of tomato juice. He remembers her being very chilled out when they all went to a jazz club in Chicago during a conference.

There were many tensions within CMHR, after relations between Kathy and Helen Christensen soured. Several members of CMHR remained close to Helen and they continued to work with her and members of the Black Dog Institute. In addition, there were people who strongly believed that Anthony Bennett should be allocating substantial amounts of his time to supporting projects other than those funded by the grant which employed him.

10.10 Commercialisation of e-hub online interventions

CMHR's online interventions were outstandingly successful as translations of research, and their value could potentially be commercialised. When Kathy and Helen met Sir Muir Gray⁸ in England, he advised them to, "Do good. Have fun. Make money." Kathy was not motivated by personal gain, but was willing to consider collaborations or commercialisation as a way of increasing beneficial impact.

She engaged with Fiona Nelms (Director of Innovation ANU Technology Transfer) and with Mick Cardew-Hall (Pro Vice-Chancellor (Innovation & Advancement)) and got on well with both of them. Fiona says, "She was always one of my favourite people to work with while I was at ANU."

Fiona Nelms remembers working with Kathy on commercialisation.

Kathy is one of warmest, kind and thoughtful researchers I ever worked with at ANU. We first started talking when the cost of supporting Moodgym became a challenge. Kathy was keen to ensure that all who wanted to access the resource could and was not keen to put a price on it. Over many conversations that covered a range of options she agreed that setting up a company to commercialise Moodgym and other programs was the best way to go. It took a team of people to achieve this outcome, most notably Kylie Bennett and Gwen Allison but I am proud of the outcome and hope Kathy is too.

I will never forget a meeting I had with Kathy and a particularly brusque and dictatorial man who was of the view that he knew everything and could solve all our problems if we (the ladies) just stepped out of the way. In his greeting with Kathy he shook her hand vigorously and tightly which obviously caused Kathy discomfort. Rather than just putting up with the manhandling Kathy quietly and politely told the man that his grip was too firm and uncomfortable. I don't think he really cared but I appreciated the actions of a woman who could stand up for herself with gentleness and dignity.

Moodgym is a globally respected program and Kathy should feel proud of her many contributions to its development. I am sure that through her efforts and commitment she has touched many lives and helped many individuals.

After Kathy's decision to retire, and following normal practice, ANU scheduled a Review of the operation of CMHR/NIMHR. Without Kathy the Review decided that the e-hub activities couldn't be supported within NIMHR. Since no commercialisation pathway had been determined, this action would cause a problem for Kathy's grants and the jobs of the people funded by it.

In the end, Mike Kyrios, Head of the Research School of Psychology agreed to take on e-hub. During Kathy's final long service leave and retirement, she was replaced by Mike as CIA⁹ on the Department of Health and Aged Care grant. When Mike left ANU he arranged for Kathy, now an Emeritus Professor associated with Psychology, to take back the CIA role.

Around that time John Cunningham left NIMHR and returned to Canada. Collaboration with other groups on MoodGYM became more difficult, and the question of how to financially support the ongoing operation of the services became critical.

With invaluable support from Fiona Nelms and from Paul McGinness, a private lawyer who had worked on setting up the Foundation for Mental Health Research, a spinoff company e-hub Health was formed. Kylie and Anthony took long service leave and moved to the company, taking on the responsibility with no contracts in place, and paying for the AWS¹⁰ servers from their own savings. To add to the stress, the German insurance company AOK indicated that it might drop MoodGYM. Kylie took a lightning trip to Berlin and managed to persuade them to stay on board.

When contracts were eventually put in place, the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care contracted with ANU, represented by the Research School of Psychology (RSP). ANU

⁸https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muir_Gray Accessed 19 July 2023.

⁹First among Chief Investigators

¹⁰Amazon Web Services

then sub-contracted with e-hub Health and took a cut for managing the contract, reporting etc. After Mike Kyrios departed ANU, Kathy, as an Emeritus Professor within RSP, took on the unpaid role of managing the contract, with the assistance of a passing parade of administrative staff.

In 2021 e-hub Health was acquired by the Canadian company Dialogue.

10.11 National Institute for Mental Health Research

Kathy was justifiably very proud of the achievements of SPRU and CMHR over the four decades and, as its director, had a vision that those achievements could be grown and amplified in future. She wanted to raise its profile and consequently organised a name change to the National Institute for Mental Health Research (NIMHR). The name was consistent with ANU's role as the national university and with the name of a sister research group, the National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health (NCEPH).

With the more recent structural reorganisations described in Chapter 12, Kathy's former group was subsumed into what was NCEPH and has reverted to its old name.



The Marie Jonsson-Harrison painting commissioned by Kathy to symbolise NIMHR's work.

10.12 Public policy

At least as important as carrying out great research in mental health is translating it into community practice. In conjunction with Helen Christensen, and later as Director of CMHR, Kathy worked hard to develop relationships with relevant politicians and mental health organisations. She interacted with Kate Carnell, both as ACT Chief Minister and as CEO of Beyond Blue, and with later ACT Chief Ministers Katy Gallagher and Andrew Barr. She had a very productive relationship with Michael Moore as Minister for Health in the Carnell government.

At a federal level she had dealings with Kay Patterson, Tony Abbott, Christopher Pyne, Andrew Wilkie, Andrew Robb, Penny Wright, Helen Coonan, and Mark Butler. Kathy admired the work of

MIEACT (Mental Illness Education, ACT) and Butler was receptive to the idea of replicating the idea in other jurisdictions.

Kathy enjoyed meeting these people and promoting action to improve mental health.

Kathy's contributions to MIEACT and WCS – Pam Boyer, Director of Mental Health at Woden Community Service

In both my recent roles, as the CEO of Mental Illness Education (MIEACT) between 2007 – 2014, and the Director of Mental Health at Woden Community Service (2014 – 2023), I have had interactions and connections with Kathy while she was with the Centre for Mental Health Research (CMHR) at the ANU.

Kathy always wanted to showcase services in the community, and the magic of our community-based service system for people living with mental illness. She knew how to highlight and value the importance of capturing and listening to personal stories and experiences when evaluating and improving service design. Her influence was important for keeping this front and centre in all our interactions with the CMHR.

MIEACT is an organization that supports the voices of lived experience of mental illness to be heard in a range of forums, and expressly to help address the stigma that exists around mental illness and encourage early help seeking behaviour.

Kathy was a fabulous supporter of this small niche organization, supporting the model MIEACT had developed to recruit, train and support volunteers with a lived experience of mental illness to deliver their stories in a way that was safe for themselves and their audience. MIEACT ensures that the principle of 'do no harm' is at the forefront of all interactions with both volunteers and the audiences that experienced the MIEACT programs, and this is embedded through the MIEACT model. Kathy used opportunities on the national and international stage to promote this local organization and its model. We had the privilege to present at conferences and forums alongside her about MIEACT which gave credibility to our work.

When I moved to Woden Community Service (WCS) in 2014, my work was more focused on service delivery in the mental health sector, but my interactions with Kathy continued. She spearheaded the evaluation we were undertaking of our Transition to Recovery Program (TRec), a psychosocial, community based, non-clinical approach to supporting people who were experiencing mental illness. TRec is a Step-Up Step-Down community outreach service, a key component of the mental health sector in the ACT, but in 2011 when it was first introduced it was unique and untested, and needed to show its contribution to the evidence base of psychosocial support for people living with mental illness. Kathy supported the academic evaluation of TRec, to show how a service such as this can make a difference for people who are either exiting hospital or potentially facing a hospital admission.

Kathy knew the value of the TRec evaluation report and the contribution it would make to the sector. She knew it was crucial to have the people who were using the service, those living with mental health challenges, have the opportunity to give feedback about the service and what that made a difference for them. Kathy's very considered and consultative manner helped shape the approach of the evaluation and brought forth the evidence to highlight the need to have a service that was respectful, person-centered and tailored to the individual.

Kathy has been a great 'friend' of the community sector. She is approachable, inclusive, has attention to detail and has great humanity. We – the community sector and all those who interact with it - have all benefited from her approach, her intelligence, her humility and her incredible warmth.

With contributions from Prue Gleeson – previous Manager of Mental Health at WCS.

She didn't have any real interaction with Kevin Rudd, but his wife Thérèse Rein remembered her from when Kathy had been her tutor in Psychology at ANU.

Kathy was impressed with Helen Coonan's turnaround after an interview gaffe in 2002. Coonan,

then Assistant Federal Treasurer, said that sufferers of depression or anxiety should get over it and get back to work.¹¹

Grace Groom, CEO of the Mental Health Council of Australia, delivered a blistering response on ABC radio and Coonan reversed her position. Kathy was a friend and admirer of Grace Groom who tragically died in 2006. Kathy travelled to Brisbane for her funeral.

Of course Kathy worked with other CEOs of the Mental Health Council, including John Mendoza and Frank Quinlan, with Ian Hickie (CEO of beyondblue) and with Pat McGorry. In 2010 McGorry was named Australian of the Year. That year he was scheduled to give a keynote talk at an event in Geelong, but was unable to attend, and Kathy took his place. Says Kathy:

They didn't advertise the change ahead of time and I turned up with some trepidation, feeling like an imposter. I tried to ease the disconnect and to demonstrate my bona fides by showing a picture of Pat on a surf board, followed by one of my father in his youth being pulled along the beach by a group of women. (See photo on Page 61.) I'm not sure that this family connection to surf boards justified my appearance at the event but the audience was polite enough not to complain.

Of course, CMHR worked with organisations such as LifeLine and its executives such as Alan Woodward and its CEO Dawn O'Neil who later became CEO of beyondblue. Another organisation OzHelp was set up by the ACT building industry in 2001 to promote workplace health and wellbeing, after a spate of suicides by construction workers.

At the invitation of the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM), Kathy undertook a nation-wide lecture tour, delivering training to its employees in all eight capital cities.

Kathy became a fellow in ANU's Crawford Institute of Public Policy and in 2014 was invited by ANU's Chancellor Gareth Evans to give a talk in the inaugural Australian Leadership Forum. She interacted with then-current or former senior public servants including Jane Halton (Secretary of the Department of Health, 2002-2014), Allan Fels (former CEO of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission), Ken Henry (former Secretary of the Department of the Treasury, later Chairman of National Australia Bank), and Ross Garnaut (a highly influential economist and former Australian Ambassador to China).

She also interacted with former Victorian Premiers John Brumby and Jeff Kennett, the latter on multiple occasions due to his role as founder and Chair of beyondblue.

Kathy's position and reputation led to her being invited onto many committees relating to mental health. Her CV lists 25 national and state health policy and practice groups to which she has contributed, relating to depression, anxiety, suicide prevention, consumer involvement, stigma reduction, veterans, the National Broadband Network, and mental health in general. In addition, the CV lists dozens of contributions to scientific and professional committees, panels, working groups, forums, conferences, program committees, workshops, Senate select committees, and think tanks (both national and international).

In case you think she wasn't active enough, she examined postgraduate theses for 14 different institutions, reviewed submissions for 37 different scientific journals, and grant proposals for granting bodies in seven different countries. She provided training or lectures for many different organisations.

Her CV lists 37 public lectures, including the 1989 National Science and Technology Centre Christmas Lecture. She also addressed an Australian Women of the Year Association luncheon, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission, and the Byron Bay Writers Festival. She also cultivated a prominent media position, always trying to promote mental health and CMHR/NIMHR. Her CV lists dozens of interviews in print and on radio. She was one of ANU's recognized media stars.

¹¹<https://www.smh.com.au/national/coonan-gaffe-on-depression-20021003-gdfoun.html> accessed 19 July 2023.

10.13 Rural and remote mental health

In rural and remote areas of Australia, mental health problems including suicide are prevalent and access to services is poor. Coming from a rural background herself Kathy worked to improve rural and remote mental health. As previously noted (Page 9) Kathy was instrumental in setting up MulgaNet, a mental health communication network for people in rural and remote areas.

Of course, online interventions like e-Couch are part of the solution, but internet services in remote areas are much worse than in cities. An interesting finding from her stigma research was that, contrary to popular belief, stigma was not higher among rural residents.



Noel Trevaskis, champion of rural mental health, at the launch of BluePages. Photo: ANU Photography Unit.

Noel Trevaskis was a great supporter of CMHR. Based in Goulburn and later Bega, and with a long career in the agricultural industry, he was influential in the humanitarian service organisation Rotary International and worked very hard to improve mental health awareness and services in the bush. I remember him auctioning a truckload of superphosphate to raise funds. He was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia for his work on de-stigmatising mental illness.

I remember driving Kathy to Yass one evening to give a talk on mental health issues at the RSL club. I did wonder at the incongruity of the setting, with its focus on alcohol and gambling. I also recall Kathy travelling to Merimbula, NSW with Georgia Tayler to raise mental health awareness. This was prior to her employment at CMHR and prior to the days of Mental Health First Aid and she based her talk on the evidence-based depression guidelines she had written for the NHMRC. Even then, she undertook before-talk and after-talk assessments of attendee knowledge, the talk and the evaluation being a forerunner of subsequent research she and others were to undertake at CMHR.

My sister Jenny Ahrens ran an integrated primary mental health service for Northeast Health, based in Wangaratta, Victoria. She had many discussions with Kathy who supported her model of care and attempted to raise awareness among her high level contacts of this innovative approach. Jenny's submission to the Senate Committee on Community Care is online.¹²



Kathy was taken to visit the Christmas Markets near Heidelberg by Hans-Werner Wahl. Photo: Kathy.

10.14 International collaborations

Kylie and Anthony Bennett admired Kathy's ability to develop collaborations, and friendships with international researchers. They remarked on the effusive receptions afforded her when she met colleagues at international conferences, and the depth of the relationships with the research group from Tromsø, Norway.

Tromsø people visited Canberra on a number of occasions. Ove Lintvedt came several times, and I remember walking with him on Black Mountain and in the Molonglo Gorge. Ove also came to Canberra with Martin Eisemann and Knut Waterloo. When Kathy invited them to dinner they came with Norwegian souvenirs and bottles of a liqueur made from arctic cloudberry.

Unfortunately, Kathy only had the opportunity to visit Tromsø once. She and Helen Christensen attended an international telemedicine conference there, and I and Helen's then husband Iain Dunlop went along as accompanying spouses. The conference was held around mid-summer's day and the weather was fine and sunny. Since Tromsø is well inside the arctic circle, the sun shone all night long, and it was easily possible to read in natural light at any hour of the day or night.

In 2013, Kathy gave a plenary talk on MoodGYM at a huge epidemiology conference (IFPE Congress) held in Leipzig, Germany.¹³ It was entitled *Improving mental health outcomes at a population level: A global e-mental health service*. This was not the usual audience for Kathy's area of research,

¹²<https://www.aph.gov.au/DocumentStore.ashx?id=d1da04dd-741e-41df-b4c0-a1496d8e42b6> Accessed 19 July 2023.

¹³https://www.ifpe-epidemiology.org/assets/doc/IFPE_2013Leipzig_programme.pdf Accessed 19 July 2023.

but it happened that a couple of Australians were in the audience. One of them was from the ANU's Centre for Ageing, Health and Wellbeing. He reported, "I was sitting down the back and when the talk started people were staring down at their phones, as they are wont to do in such events. As the talk progressed they quickly abandoned their phones and became engrossed." The other was Harvey Whiteford, a previous federal Director of Mental Health who was very influential in the mental health area. He expressed support for continued funding for the CMHR e-mental health services.

Steffi Riedel-Heller from the University of Leipzig was a co-organizer of the conference. She ran a successful randomised control trial (RCT) on a German version of Moodgym, and had a relationship with AOK, one of the biggest health insurance companies in Germany. Eventually AOK contracted with ANU to pay for the provision of a German language MoodGYM service.

Also in Germany, Kathy had connections at the University of Heidelberg. She fondly remembers being taken to Christmas Markets near Heidelberg by Hans-Werner Wahl where she, who never drinks more than a sip of alcohol, discovered that she liked glühwein. She collaborated with Stephanie Bauer and they jointly supervised Kathina Ali's PhD on eating disorders.

Martin Eisemann, Emeritus Professor at the Arctic University of Norway

It all started in 2004 when Kathy and some colleagues from the CMHR travelled 15000 km, i.e. from 35° South to 70° North to attend a Telemedicine conference at UiT (The Arctic University of Norway). Their MoodGYM, an Internet-based cognitive behaviour therapy program awakened interest in our research group, and we started immediately to develop a Norwegian version. Our long-distance collaboration was intensified, and NRC funds allowed us to recruit a number of PhD students. Despite the distance Kathy contributed generously in co-supervising our PhD students and by co-authoring several publications which was highly appreciated. We were also invited to Canberra and ANU and were impressed by the Center. We really enjoyed the hospitality by Kathy and David. We also got acquainted with a, for us Norwegians, unimaginable Australian custom, when David brought the wine to the restaurant. Finally, do not forget our special North-Norwegian natural spectacle: the Northern Lights which we can admire in the Polar night (Oct-Feb), i.e. during your midsummer.





Back row: Dan Fassnacht, Lou Farrer, Kathy. Front: Kathina Ali, Dan and Kathina's son Kimo.
Photographer unknown.

CMHR had significant collaborations with the Free University (VU) in Amsterdam in the Netherlands. Pim Cuijpers was the principal senior collaborator but Kathy also published with Heleen Riper. I remember walking in Canberra, and the Snowy Mountains, with Pim, too.

Kathy also worked with Tara Donker and Robin Kok from VU. We provided accommodation for Robin, during his visiting fellowship under Kathy's supervision, in the granny flat in our backyard. His homepage¹⁴ is very amusing. Also in the Netherlands, Kathy presented talks on consumer mental health research and CRU at Utrecht.

Across the channel, Kathy worked with John Powell of the University of Oxford on randomised control trials (RCTs) of MoodGYM in an NHS context and the effectiveness of e-Couch in preventing social anxiety.

Across the Pond, Kathy and Helen Christensen worked with Lee Ritterband of the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, VA on treating depression by addressing insomnia.

Kathina Ali on what it was like being Kathy's student

"I remember the first advice I received from you was to choose a project I am passionate about. This enabled me to enjoy and finish the journey with passion and continued interest to conduct further research in the area of eating disorders. All your wisdom, guidance and support throughout the PhD has shaped the way I approach, conduct, and communicate research while at the same time caring for the broader benefit of the community. Words cannot express my gratitude for everything you did for me during this exciting journey."

I wrote this about Kathy in the acknowledgements of my PhD thesis. Eight years later — after having met Kathy in Canberra in 2014 — I continue to talk about the first advice she gave me. It was the best guidance for me navigating academia, and something I share with my students now. Kathy has truly inspired me.

¹⁴<https://www.robinkok.eu/about/> Accessed 19 July 2023.

I and my partner Dan relocated from Singapore to Canberra so I could pursue a PhD under Kathy's supervision. Kathy's excellent reputation as a researcher but also as a wonderful person made us make this big decision. Kathy's support during our exciting move to Australia was invaluable, and she provided me with wonderful guidance, support and wisdom during my PhD journey. I couldn't have asked for more.

The decision of moving continents was not easy as my scholarship did not cover my living costs and my partner Dan, didn't have a job yet but Kathy did everything she could to connect him with others in the field so that shortly after he secured a post doc at the ANU.

Kathy has impacted our lives and pathways significantly and has always helped and supported us through decisions and choices.

She was the best supervisor and is the best mentor I could ask for and I am forever grateful that I could grow alongside her support. To put it simply: We would not be where we are without Kathy.

10.15 PhD students

Kathy got a lot of pleasure out of working with bright graduate students and delighted in helping them to succeed. The topics supervised were very diverse, ranging from studies of the value of MoodGYM in various settings (Lou Farrer, Alison Calex, Kylie Bennett, Ove Lintvedt, Ben Healey), to stigma around mental health (Linda Barney, a former police officer), to mental health help-seeking in elite athletes (Amelia Gulliver), to consumer priorities for research on depression and bipolar disorder (Michelle Banfield), to the highly statistical (Jonathan Little), to eating disorders (Kathina Ali), to muscle dysmorphia (Marita Cooper), to mental health literacy and media (Lara Bishop), and to developing an app for social anxiety (Brendan Gee).

Brad Carron-Arthur studied communication in mental health internet support groups such as Blue Board. He was remarkably fit and ran nearly 5000km from Canberra to Cape York unsupported to raise money for the Australian Foundation for Mental Health Research.¹⁵ He also ran the City2Surf in Sydney with the same fund raising objective. Kathy was an enthusiastic supporter and mentor of his activities. Later, he came third in the *World's Toughest Mudder* event in Las Vegas. He covered 18 laps (144km) of the obstacle course in the allotted 24 hours.¹⁶

Two of Kathy's students made amazing efforts to complete their PhDs by their deadline. Marita Cooper applied for a post-doctoral position at the very prestigious Johns Hopkins University (JHU) in Philadelphia long before completing her thesis. If she hadn't graduated by a date set by JHU, she would have had the job offer withdrawn and would have lost all the arrangements she had made to travel to and live in the USA. After Bethany Jones had been working for two years on her topic relating to post-natal depression she realised that it wasn't possible to complete it within the time available. She abruptly switched to studying a completely divergent topic: genital satisfaction, labiaplasty, and pornography. Her thesis was entitled *The Curious Case of the Designer Vagina*. Remarkably she was able to complete the thesis within nine months – and pass. Of course when a PhD student is working to insane deadlines, so is the supervisor!

When Kathy's time at CMHR ended due to her ill-health and retirement, she had no choice but to transfer several of her students to other supervisors. She retained responsibility for several others, including Kylie Bennett, Kathina Ali, and Marita Cooper, and later resumed supervision of Brad Carron-Arthur.

Who says you can put your feet up in retirement? ☺

¹⁵<https://www.canberratimes.com.au/story/6169419/graduate-revels-in-epic-run-to-cape-york/> Accessed 19 July 2023.

¹⁶<https://www.canberratimes.com.au/story/6058140/canberra-man-brad-carron-arthur-finishes-third-in-worlds-toughest-mudder-in-las-vegas/> Accessed 19 July 2023.

10.16 Remote working at Creighton

Around 2009 Kathy and I made arrangements with our employers to remote work from the farm. We obtained external monitors for our laptops, and bought a printer/scanner/copier. Initially we relied on the landline telephone and a dial-up modem for communication back to Canberra, but as technology improved we progressively upgraded to using an iPhone as a hotspot, and then to a fixed-wireless version of the National Broadband Network.

We loved the environment of the Creighton farm but the house was freezing in winter and very hot in summer. Working or reading on summer evenings was exceedingly unpleasant due to clouds of insects. We thought about renovating and upgrading, but to bring the old house up to a comfortable standard would have cost a very large amount of money. Furthermore, the size and arrangement of rooms wasn't well matched to our needs and changing layouts would have destroyed the historical character of the place.

Instead, in 2017, we built a small house (Creighton II) near the old one. The new house is a passive solar design, has an insulated slab, insulated SIPS panel walls, double glazing and a Tridek roof.¹⁷ Fingers crossed, there are no gaps in walls or above ceilings for rodents or serpents and, provided that doors are not left open, no likelihood of them getting inside. Creighton II was a far better environment for remote working but within a year, we had both retired. ☺

10.17 An overall perspective of Kathy's time at CMHR

Andrew Mackinnon, now a quantitative psychologist and statistician at the Black Dog Institute in Sydney, was a long-term member and former Deputy Director of CMHR. He thinks of his time there with Kathy as a golden age.

Andrew Mackinnon describes a golden age at CMHR

I worked with Kathy during what I consider a golden age of the Centre for Mental Health Research. But golden ages don't just occur — they are a product of the people in an organization and what they bring to it, including attributes that extend beyond formal work skills. And so it was with the Centre for Mental Health Research and Kathy. A new director (Tony Jorm) took over from Scott Henderson and brought a wider perspective on mental health, and the Centre grew from being a small, isolated entity on the edge of the University to one with impact on community mental health that came to be recognized internationally. Kathy's transition from her previous neuroscience/psychology focus to that of a population based academic was a key part of this flowering of the Centre.

Towards the end of the century the internet escaped from universities and organizations like the CSIRO. Its potential for broad scale communication and dissemination of information was quickly realized. But the quality of much of the 'information' on the net was limited and often suspect: what was offered could often be as harmful as it was helpful. Kathy was instrumental in looking at the key indicators of quality information on the internet in a paper in the British Medical Journal in 2000: important because its publication there recognized the importance of the area and the work emerging from Canberra.

Programs and websites offering therapy for various mental health problems had been developed but most were highly experimental or, of those widely available, were really just on-line book segments. MoodGYM eclipsed these dramatically. It really did use what the internet had to offer, pushed technical boundaries and what was possible over dial-up. And it did this while offering contemporary, evidenced-based therapy aimed at young people. A quarter of a century on it may be difficult to appreciate just how revolutionary and innovative all of this was, but it really was pioneering. There were detractors and those who believed offering

¹⁷ A sandwich of 200mm of polystyrene between two layers of Colorbond corrugated iron.

treatment for mental health conditions using the internet was impossible, bad or dangerous but time has proved them wrong. Within the bubble (!) of the Centre, the atmosphere was much more positive. These projects brought together the sorts of people not normally found in mental health research: graphic artists, programmers. Kathy's son Jack made a contribution to MoodGYM and the work on assessing the quality of website and information was an academic element in the lifetime collaboration with Dave.

It mustn't be forgotten that not all Kathy's contributions to mental health were technology based. Her work on stigma is also very notable. Tony Jorm's concepts of mental health literacy and attitudes to mental illness no doubt laid the groundwork for this, but Kathy's approach was more complete and nuanced, and political. She saw that stigma wasn't just a disposition that others held towards an individual but was often internalized, reflecting beliefs a person held about themselves, and attitudes they believed others held about mental illness. This has had immediate, practical consequences — these forms of stigma are a great impediment to seeking help. And it reinforced the importance of 'lived experience' in determining and investigating the important issues to affect those with depression.

Relevant to the above was Kathy's important initiatives in advancing academic consumer researchers. Many mental health researchers somehow manage to promote the high prevalence of disorders while maintaining the fantasy that they and their colleagues have some sort of immunity to these problems. Worse still, the support given to academics who disclose their mental health problems was highly uncertain. Yet people with the dual perspective of having experience of mental illness and training and skills in research have the potential to make unique contributions to research. This was partly recognised in the increasing inclusion of consumer representatives on research committees but Kathy's role leading what I believe was the first Consumer Research Unit in mental health anywhere in the world, took this a step further.

Almost no medical researchers get to race out of the lab with the cure for 'their' disease in a test tube. However, a few can look back and see they have helped to change the landscape of the field they have worked in and have improved the lives of people who experience the conditions they researched. Kathy can clearly do this: the internet is now a primary means of addressing and preventing the full range of mental health conditions, a whole spectrum of interventions and campaigns continue to target stigma, and there is a much greater recognition of the contribution of those with lived experience to research in the field. Her passion, drive and intelligence were crucial ingredients in the success of the work of CMHR, and her continuing and seemingly unstoppable continuing contribution.

I'm not sure I've really captured in the above the atmosphere that existed at the time. Kathy really was pleasant | nice | lovely to work with. It sounds trivial but there aren't that many people I'd be prepared to say that about.

Chapter 11

Per ardua ad astra

Kathy's exceptional achievements have been underpinned not only by her native intelligence but by dogged determination, intense focus on the task at hand, and an ability to work to the very limits of endurance. Initially, I think her massive-concentration-of-forces approach was motivated by doubt in her own abilities, and [unrealistic] fear of failure. It turned out to be a very useful tool for achieving goals for her team and for the causes she supported.

We recently discovered that Kathy's parents had retained all her letters – Harold didn't throw them in the boiler. Among them was the below letter from c.1973, when Kathy and I were living in MacDonnell St, Yarralumla. It reminds me that Kathy's ability to focus intensely was there from the very beginning of our time together.

Letter from Dave / Kathy to Kathy's parents c. 1973.

Dear Mum & Dad, (if you'll still own me!)

Just a short note to apologize for the lack of a letter, to you, from Kathy. Kathy has been working very hard indeed. So hard, in fact, that we have to drag her off to bed and chain her there at night. At meal times we have to cut up her food and shove it into her mouth, while she types with one hand and one eye, writes with the other hand, and adds up figures with her other hand and part of her brain. I managed to briefly attract her attention the other day (by exploding a stick of dynamite on the clothesline). We are all in dire financial straits because we have to pay a team of truck drivers full-time to bring in writing materials and cart away scrap paper and finished essays.

Kathy provided the following:

1. State of health ... Well.
2. Prevailing weather conditions ... Fine.
3. How are you ... ?
4. Need money? No.
5. Canberra looks ... glazed ... on this ... grass ... day.
6. Contemplated change of course ... Down (in sinking ship.)
7. Reason for closing this letter ... The postman may read all these private details.

Lots of love, Kathy! (and Dave)

My writing on the letter was too scrappy to include the original.

You probably don't have a very clear idea of just how intense Kathy's focus can be, or just how great are her limits of endurance. Let me illustrate with a few stories.

Relaxing in the bath. Kathy's preferred way of relaxing during a period of intense work was to soak in a nice warm bath. One day during her time as Director of CMHR, I discovered her soaking in the bath in the morning, holding her laptop above the water and furiously responding to emails. I took a photo but I'm afraid I can't share it with you.

Working night and day. While still suffering from CFS, and severely limited physically, Kathy took on some consultancy projects for the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), writing clinical practice guidelines. (In fact she wrote the guidelines on how to write such guidelines.) In one case, a Working Party established to write a document had used up all but one month of its allotted time. The NHMRC engaged Kathy to resolve all the disputes, organise community consultations in all eight capital cities, and write the guidelines, by the deadline! They asked her to work 'night and day.' Kathy took them literally. She visited all the capitals on a punishingly tight timeframe and I believe ran community meetings in Brisbane and Perth on the same day!!!

When she submitted her invoice, recording her weekly hours worked, she short-changed herself but still claimed several weeks of more than 100 hours worked. The report was successfully finished and finished to Kathy's exacting standards, but it would be true to say that there was more than a hint of stress in the house.

Keynoting in Madrid. In 2014 Kathy was invited to give a talk at the World Psychiatric Congress at a conference centre in Madrid, Spain. To save CMHR money, she stayed not in the expensive hotel at the conference centre but in a cheap one in the city. To get to the conference required two changes on the Metro.

On the day of her talk, as on other days, she took the metro rather than an expensive taxi. Descending the stairs at the first metro change, she fell badly, injuring her leg. Metro staff wanted to take her upstairs to see a doctor, but Kathy pushed on with the rest of her journey, and delivered her talk while still shaken, managing to fall up the stairs on her way to the lectern.

Because of the pain she traveled home earlier. On the flight home she was treated by a fellow passenger who was a paramedic. He had noticed her trying to exercise her swollen leg to ward off DVT and was very concerned by the state of the leg. He managed to obtain some low-dose aspirin for her. When I collected her from the airport her leg was swollen to about three times its normal size and was black from thigh to toe tip.

Searching, searching. When most people try to find something on the web, they submit a query to Google (or Bing), and either accept an answer from the first ten results, or give up. Not Kathy!

When writing systematic reviews or performing meta-analyses as part of her research, she would go to PubMed and experiment with various alternative query formulations before deciding on the one to use. She would then run the query and narrow down the result set by reading all the abstracts. Often there would be thousands, and the narrowing down would typically leave more than a hundred articles (often many more than that) to be read and understood.

Thesis nit-picking. Kathy's PhD thesis was, of course, comprehensive and thorough. She was very determined that it be letter-perfect, and, as previously noted, made me proof-read it twice, once reading backwards.

Pushing beyond sensible limits. On several occasions I've seen Kathy tired and stressed beyond normal human endurance. I've tried, "Take a short-cut!", "It won't matter if it's a day late.", "Let me handle the problem.", "Cut corners!", "They don't need or expect perfection.", "Go to bed. Have a rest." All to absolutely no avail. ☺

These days, in retirement, Kathy retains the ability to focus intensely on research problems. She loves researching a question! Questions relating to just about any topic in health, cross-country walking, travel insurance, family history, pet care, or the purchase of domestic appliances for us or for friends, sends her multiple times to PubMed or Google (or Bing) and to online documents and books. Her eyes are glued to the screen or the book, and stimuli from the world fade into insignificance. Fortunately, dynamite on the clothesline still works to get her attention. ☺ I'm relieved that these days she no longer feels the need to finish off by writing a comprehensive, letter-perfect report.

While working on this book, I've idly mentioned various topics to Kathy, without asking her to do anything. So far her love of research has resulted in her examining many thousands of old photographs, reading a filing cabinet full of letters, signing up to *Ancestry.com* and trawling through masses of information on births, deaths and marriages. She brings to bear her critical faculties on the sometimes bogus information on Ancestry. "So this woman married a Griffiths in such and such a year, but already had ten children called Griffiths? That doesn't sound right."

It was the same on two previous books I wrote (*The History of Computing at ANU* and *Funnelback and Me*.¹) – raise an idle question and soon afterward get the definitive answers.

I couldn't ask for a better research assistant, and I don't even have to pay her!

¹Both online at <https://openresearch-repository.anu.edu.au/handle/1885/237792> Accessed 19 July 2023.

Chapter 12

Downfall of CMHR e-Mental Health

Unfortunately, ANU changes around the time of CMHR's 40th anniversary in 2014, effectively brought an end to ANU's world leading role in e-mental health.

12.1 Consequences of the departure of Helen Christensen

Helen Christensen, former Director of CMHR has a stellar academic record. She and Kathy made a great team. When she floated the idea that she might leave ANU, I was astonished that ANU made no serious effort to retain her. Contrary to established practice however, when she left in 2011, ANU conferred Emeritus status on her, even though she had not retired.

Unfortunately, with Kathy focused on the future of CMHR, and Helen's priorities transferring to her new institution, work-related disagreements led to a breakdown in relations between the two formerly close colleagues.

Despite this, Kathy remains grateful to Helen and to her predecessor Tony Jorm, for their role in starting and developing her career in mental health research.

12.2 Funding rule change

University administrations see research grants in a different light to the university researchers who are awarded them. If a researcher wins external funding for a total of \$1 million, they naturally want to spend it all on employing researchers or support staff. However, new employees need office space, ergonomic desks, chairs and computers. They increase the university's heating, water and electricity bills and increase the load on computer networks, IT services, libraries, HR department, car parks and roads. In addition, the task of bidding for grants, whether successful or not, imposes load on the research support section. Finally, extra load arises from the requirement to review and report on progress on the grant. All this imposes extra costs on the rest of the university.

For grants awarded by the main government grant agencies, support for some of these additional costs is provided through the Research Support Program (RSP), awarded in proportion to the value of Australian Research Council (ARC) and National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) grants received by the institution. But RSP doesn't apply to grants such as the large contract between CMHR and the Department of Health and Aged Care (DHAC).

In Kathy's last years at CMHR, ANU dramatically increased the amount they required to cover overheads to substantially more than the value of the grant itself. Unfortunately, the contract which funded the bulk of CMHR's e-mental health activities, providing substantial research infrastructure and societal benefit, appeared to come under this rule, but there was no possibility that DHAC, subject to budget pressures of its own, would deliver double or triple the previous year's funding. The ANU rule change was an important factor leading to the spinning off of the MoodGYM, Mental Health Guru, and eCouch services to e-hubHealth, and, in practice, to reduced ANU research activity in the area.

12.3 Detrimental re-organisation

Another ANU change detrimental to CMHR was the reorganisation of the structure of the university relating to research centres. For several decades, the SPRU Director reported directly to the Vice-Chancellor, but over succeeding years, CMHR had been pushed down the reporting hierarchy. Eventually, it was decided that CMHR, along with other health-related research centres, should be pushed together under a new Research School with a new Director, under a College with a Dean.

Of course there was no extra funding for the new Research School Director and their staff, leading to a transfer of funds and other resources away from centres such as CMHR.

ANU academics are entitled to spend one day per week on paid consultancies and to receive the money as personal income. Many academics instead choose to have the money paid into an ANU Q account which they can then use to buy equipment for the university, fund research trials, pay the cost of publishing in open-access journals, or send graduate students to conferences they otherwise couldn't attend. Over the years, Kathy had put a lot of money into her Q accounts and been able to achieve a lot of beneficial outcomes.

With the reorganisation, the Q accounts were shifted to the Research School level and out of her control. She was particularly distressed that a \$10,000 prize she had won, was taken in this way and that her request to use part of it to support a PhD student's work was refused.

CMHR support staff in finance and IT, worked as integral members of the CMHR team. In finance, Fiona Hurley played an invaluable role in supporting CMHR activities under first Helen's and later Kathy's directorships. In IT, Anthony Bennett was a key member of the e-mental health teams, while providing skilled advice and problem-solving support to other CMHR activities. However, due to the additional costs of the extra organisational layer finance and IT functions had to be centralised, leading to a loss of team effectiveness.

12.4 Forced teaching of undergraduates

A new rule was imposed that all researchers in the new Research School were required to spend time teaching undergraduate courses – "otherwise where will our graduate students come from?"

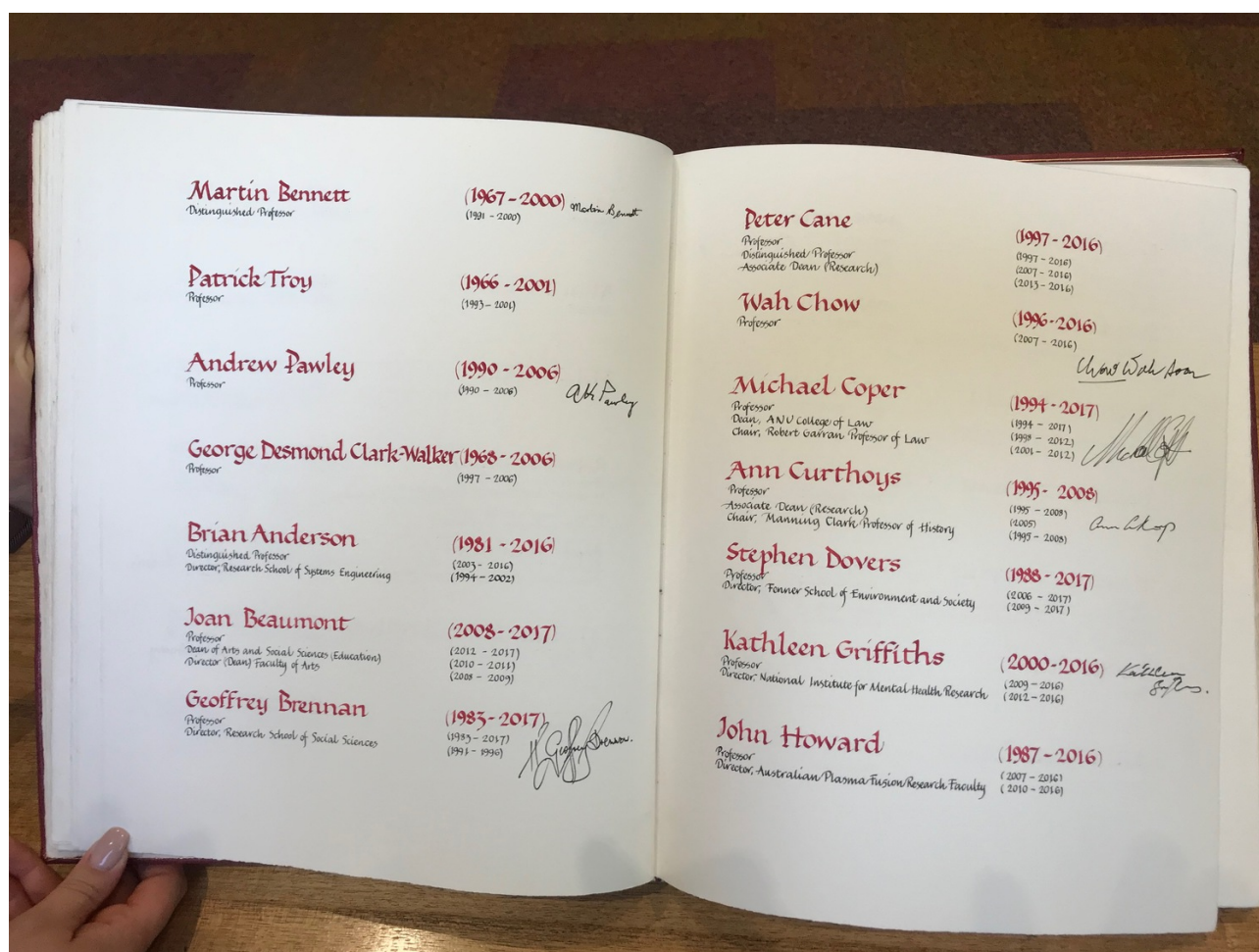
It's not that researchers teaching undergraduates is a bad idea – Kathy had done it many times and generously contributed to courses run, for example, through the John Curtin School of Medical Research. However, at the time, Kathy was supervising 13 PhD students – about 13 times the average supervisory load for academics. In Kathy's extensive experience, potential PhD students chose institution and supervisor on the basis of their research excellence in the relevant area, not on how well they taught undergraduate courses. Clearly, recruiting graduate students was not a problem for her, and undergraduate teaching would take time away from her supervisory activities, from her own research, and from time required by her role as Director.

Finally, Kathy's NHMRC research fellowship required her to spend the bulk of her time on research. She says:

Securing an NHMRC Research Fellowship is highly competitive. It requires you to tick lots of boxes in terms of research outputs, impact, grant successes, invitations to present keynotes and plenary sessions, nationally and internationally, winning awards, service to research, community contributions and so on. What it doesn't require is teaching. I was happy to contribute to other people's courses on an occasional basis but taking on a serious teaching load was a step too far in an already overloaded work life and on a Research Fellowship specifically awarded to support research. From a personal perspective I could have relinquished the fellowship and reverted to my continuing ANU position, but then the money from my fellowship would no longer be available to employ other staff.



Kathy was appointed as an Emeritus Professor by ANU in 2016 and was asked to come into the Chancery to sign the register.



Signing the register made us realise that Emeritus status is quite rarely conferred. The pages of the register have relatively few entries per page and it goes back to the founding of ANU in 1946. There are many famous names.



2016: Packing up her office in CMHR was a very difficult day for Kathy. On the way out of the building for the last time she asked me to photograph the awards displayed in the foyer. Nearly all are for the web based mental health services. The stainless steel item is an iAward from the Australian Information Industry Association.

12.5 A sad end

When Kathy took over as Director of the Centre for Mental Health Research she was fighting fires on all fronts, both internally and externally, to protect and stabilise the centre. That was a huge responsibility since staff were early career and the centre ran on soft money – about 80% of budget. Most of the responsibility for raising the money rested with her.

Soon after she took on the leadership role, and just before Christmas, she suffered a panic attack so severe and so different from the couple that she had previously experienced in her life that she did not recognise what it was. Her colleagues were so concerned that they called an ambulance. After discharge from A & E she suffered continuous panic attacks (diagnosed as a workplace injury) over a period of months. Her colleagues kindly locked away her computer to ensure she couldn't do any work over the Christmas New Year break but attempted relaxation failed to bring relief. Instead she played Angry Birds¹ on the entire trip from Canberra to the farm – with frightening intensity.

Due to the continued nature of these attacks Kathy soon consulted a leading psychiatrist in Sydney who told her she must take two months leave. But she kept going, feeling that the survival of the Centre depended on her at that point. It required a lot of bravery to keep going because she never knew when the attacks would strike. Says Kathy:

It is stressful in itself to be sitting in a high level meeting and not know if and when an attack might occur. I just had to go with the flow. It was the only way to cope. Eventually after about 6 months the attacks disappeared, much to my relief.

Unfortunately, mental health issues returned in the months before she decided to retire. The changes described in the previous sections took away many of the factors which had made the CMHR e-mental health team so exceptionally successful. This, along with other seriously negative workplace factors which I can't write about here, caused Kathy severe issues with her mental health. She followed medical advice and took leave before choosing to retire in 2016. In Kathy's words:

I did feel that many of the factors which made the CMHR e-mental health team so successful were being removed. My best and most persistent efforts encountered a brick wall that was not amenable to change. I've always persisted no matter what. Giving up is almost anathema to me. It was perhaps the first time in my life where I reluctantly came to the conclusion that persistence is not always appropriate and that giving up in some circumstances is a sign of wisdom rather than weakness. It was an interesting albeit painful lesson to learn.

In the years that followed her retirement, she felt a strong psychological aversion to even being on the ANU campus. I had to accompany her to the Chancery to provide moral support while she signed the ANU's Emeritus Register. Despite this she has stepped in when ANU has requested her help in documenting such matters as the success of MoodGYM as part of ERA² impact cases, drafting NHMRC's case study,³ etc.

¹<https://www.angrybirds.com/> Accessed 19 July 2023.

²Excellence in Research for Australia. <https://www.arc.gov.au/evaluating-research/excellence-research-australia> Accessed 19 July 2023.

³MoodGYM: Case Study. <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/resources/impact-case-studies/moodgym-case-study> Accessed 19 July 2023.

Chapter 13

Walking and Other Adventures

Fortunately, time has brought healing. There is far less stress in the household and Kathy has perfected the art of a good night's sleep. She seems to have completely abandoned Angry Birds.

At home she spends time reading and working at various crafts. Since both of us have retired we have no qualms about streaming TV shows, even during the afternoon. This habit started with us watching all 33 episodes of *Inspector Morse*, one episode per day, followed by all episodes of *Lewis*, and then *Endeavour*. Kathy is unusually skilled at working out, within the first few minutes of a crime show or the first few pages of a novel, 'whodunnit' and what they did.

We planned to often travel overseas in retirement, but COVID-19 and concern about the environmental impact of jet travel has put a brake on that activity. Flying Qantas, we always chose to purchase carbon offsets. but when we switched to Singapore Airlines because they offered direct flights out of Canberra, we found they had no offset program. Generic offset schemes often involved installation of solar panels in third-world countries. We were uncertain about the legitimacy of some of them, and instead we installed an additional array of solar panels (and a battery) calculated to offset the equivalent of two flights a year to the Northern Hemisphere. We've since installed another solar array and have a total of 78 panels and four batteries.

But the problem of global heating is such a serious one that offsetting really isn't good enough. The world needs to drastically reduce emissions as well as offsetting the ones which are hardest to avoid. We also need to work out how to remove CO₂ from the atmosphere. Our future will involve a lot less jet fuel than we previously anticipated.

This chapter recounts some of the highlights of our shared travelling for pleasure, with a focus on the period after Kathy's retirement. Many of them involve walking. Kathy loves to experience places by walking, and I tag along.

Having finally overcome the physical depletion of CFS, and emerging from the mental trauma of her departure from ANU, Kathy read intensely about walking. She read websites, bought apps, and filled a shelf full of books on walking, attracted by the Larapinta Trail, the Bibbulmun Track, and the Lavender Federation and Heysen Trails, but homing in on the dramatic Tongariro Crossing in New Zealand's North Island.

13.1 Walking holidays

13.1.1 2018: Tongariro Crossing

The Tongariro Crossing ¹ is a 19.4km one-day traverse of the tortured landscape of the Volcanoes National Park with an elevation change of about 1200m. It crosses the messy, cratered flanks of Tongariro and gives spectacular close-up views of Ngauruhoe (pronounced 'Narra-hoe-ee' and known as Mountain of Doom thanks to Lord of the Rings), and the giant Ruapehu ('Roo-uh-pay-hoo') in the distance.

¹<https://www.tongarirocrossing.org.nz/> Accessed 19 July 2023.



Nov 2017: Kathy training on a northern section of the Canberra Centenary Trail.



Jan 2018: Ngauruhoe, the Mountain of Doom.

According to the web site the Tongariro Crossing is steep, slippery, subject to extreme weather, and requiring of a high level of fitness. The descent to the end is through a lahar zone, at risk of being flattened by floods of ash and mud from the volcano.

Kathy was determined that we should do it, but very worried about her level of fitness and the state of her knees. She set herself an ambitious training program, walking the stages of the 145km Centenary Trail around Canberra. ACTION² buses, Jack, and I shared the load of transporting her to and from the various sections. I hadn't yet retired but nonetheless managed to accompany her on a couple of the stages. With her usual extreme determination, she completed a stage near Tuggeranong on a day exceeding 40C!

In late January 2018 we flew into Wellington on the non-stop CBR-WLG service operated for a couple of years by Singapore Airlines.³ We hired a car and drove to Egmont National Park on the western side of North Island. The park centres around the Fujiyama-like cone of Mt Taranaki. We walked on the mountain but didn't allow enough time to walk to the summit.

We then made our way to Raurimu, near the very famous rail spiral⁴ to start the main walk. We'd booked into Wood Pigeon Lodge for six nights, planning to choose the best weather for our crossing endeavour. On arrival, one of the owners asked us to confirm that we had adequate clothing for possible extreme weather.

Us: Oh yes, we have strong rain coats, warm inner layers, and rain trousers.

Host: Rain trousers!! No-one ever died of wet legs!

It turned out that our first day there was by far the most suitable, so we jumped on the bus to take us to the start. It was wonderful – just as tough, and just as magnificent as claimed. Kathy was amazed by the range of people attempting the walk despite its difficulty. Some were obviously overweight and some were totally unprepared for a turn in the weather – T-shirt, shorts and jandals.⁵



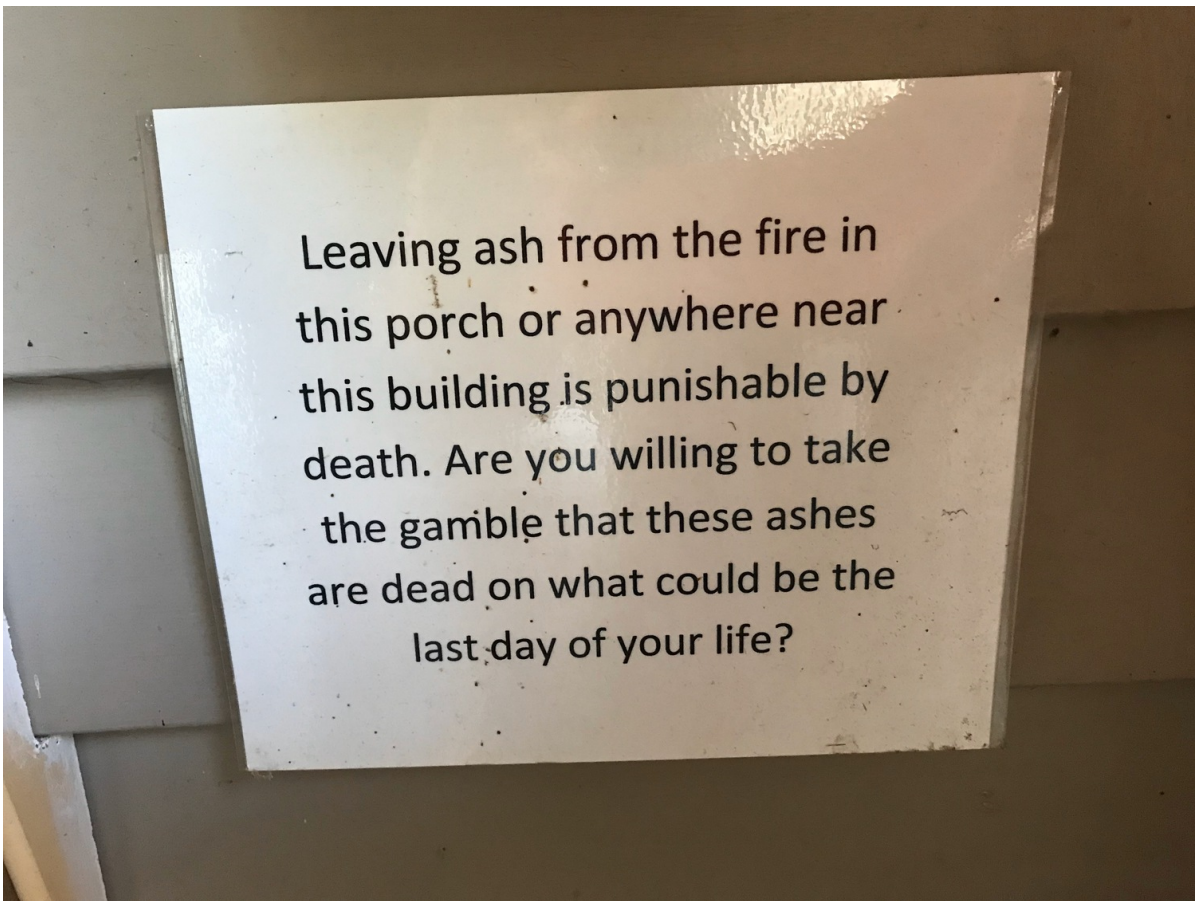
Jan 2018: Mt Taranaki; Rather intimidating efforts to preserve the wildlife in Egmont National Park.

²ACT Internal Omnibus Network

³Oh how we NZ-lovers missed it when that service ended.

⁴https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Raurimu_Spiral Accessed 19 July 2023.

⁵The Kiwi name for thongs – a contraction of Japanese sandals.



We noticed a predilection for confronting signs.



Jan 2018: Kathy relishing the rugged and smelly terrain of the Tongariro Crossing, Volcanoes National Park, NZ



Sep 2018: Porthleven is subject to huge waves. Kathy found it hard to believe that on at least one occasion waves had overtopped the tower of this church.

13.1.2 2018: South Cornwall Coast Path

Soon after our return from the Tongariro, our friend Miranda Rawlinson, emailed us, “Andy and I are walking the South Cornwall Coast Path in September. Want to come?”

It happened that we had already booked a holiday in the Frozen North to mark my entry into retirement that March. We were visiting Iceland, Greenland, the Faroes, Shetland, Scotland and the Isle of Arran, arriving back in Canberra on August 11th. Miranda’s proposal was to start the walk less than a month later, on September 6th. Ridiculous. Impossible. Let’s do it!

So we ended up walking from Penzance to Plymouth along the coast, averaging 22km per day. Our trip was self-guided, organised by Westcountry Walking Holidays. We paid them money, they booked accommodation along the route and organised for our suitcases to be transported from stop to stop.

It seems like luxury. So many beautiful and historic things to see, so many quaint villages and quirky accommodations, so many perfect Cornish cream teas, so many delicious pasties. Nearly every stage had a pub or cafe at around the halfway mark.

Despite the luxury, more than 300km in 14 days walking severely tested our retired bodies. So much hard walking! Because the cliffs of the coast have so many inlets where rivers and streams meet the sea, the walk involves endless descents and ascents. Kathy’s knees suffered terribly. She had to strap them but the strapping retained heat and caused blisters and rashes. Blisters on the feet were also a continual problem for her despite use of Wright socks⁶ and Compeed plasters.

⁶<https://wrightsock.com.au/> Accessed 19 July 2023.



Sep 2018: Portloe, Cornwall. Post-toxoplasmosis, Kathy's not at all fond of cats, but this one really liked her and did its best to win her over.



Sep 2018: Group photos near the beginning and end of our walk. Lower photo taken by a waiter.



Sep 2018: Marazion, Cornwall. Kathy in front of St Michael's Mount.



Cornwall, Sep 2018: Human artefacts enhanced by nature.



Sep 2018: The wonderful twin-towered light house at The Lizard, England's southernmost point. The old buildings between the towers have been converted into luxury holiday flats. We had the good fortune to stay a week in one on an earlier visit to Cornwall.

13.1.3 2019: West Highland Way

At the end of the Cornwall walk, Kathy declared that she didn't want to do another long walk. It was too hard and too painful.

Over time, memories of the pain faded somewhat and we fondly remembered the views and the positive sides of the experience. We started thinking of walks with shorter daily stages, and eventually fixed upon the West Highland Way in Scotland. It starts in Milngavie⁷ on the outskirts of Glasgow and ends in Fort William, passing along the eastern side of Loch Lomond, crossing the formidable Rannoch Moor, and passing through part of the incredibly beautiful Glen Coe.

We worked up the plan into a tour of Scotland and Greece with my sisters Michele and Jenny. Michele's ruined knee would confine her to normal tourist pursuits and family visiting but Jenny was very fit and would join the 16-day walk. Macs Adventure proposed a 16-day walk⁸ (averaging about 15km per day) and lined up the accommodation and luggage transfer. On the morning of 09 September, 2019 the three of us took a train to Milngavie and set off in Scotch mist (rain). If Scotland confirmed its reputation with its weather, it fortunately didn't confirm its reputation for midges – we weren't bothered by them at all.

It rained constantly on the way to the first stop in Drymen, pronounced Drimmen, but surely named for the lack of dry men. It did however have a nearly 300 year-old pub which served lovely meals.

⁷Pronounced mull-guy

⁸The record is about 16 hours!



2019: The start of the West Highland Way in Milngavie.



The Clachan Inn in the village of Drymen.



The view from Conic Hill, between Drymen and Balmaha, looking over Loch Lomond. The string of islands a little left of centre lies along the Highland Boundary Fault, with the Lowlands to the left and the Highlands to the right.

Near Crianlarich we encountered a bus load of school students gearing up to do part of our walk. Once en route, and like schoolboys everywhere, the boys were jostling each other, competing, and pushing each other out of the way. They caught up with us as Kathy was having terrible trouble trying to cross a stile whose bottom step was missing. Her injured knees just didn't want to make the huge step up. Once they realised what was happening the kids transformed, ceasing their jostling, looking concerned, and offering help. They burst into spontaneous applause when she finally cleared the stile unaided.

We took a rest day in Tyndrum, and were joined by Michele and our cousin Johnnie Hunter and his wife Hazel. Despite a population of only 167, Tyndrum is served by two railway stations, one for the Oban branch of the West Highland Line and the other for the Fort William and Mallaig branch.

After crossing the desolate Rannoch Moor, which Kathy thought beautiful, we arrived at the Glencoe Mountain Resort, at the head of Glen Coe. Our accommodation for the night was in Ballachulish at the foot of the glen and we waited in the cafe for the van which would take us there. The wild isolation of Glen Coe and the towering⁹ mountains on either side instilled a feeling of awe.

Our hotel in Ballachulish was on a sea loch, and we had great views of it from our rooms and from the excellent restaurant. We went for a late-evening stroll to the close-by but now defunct slate quarry.

Next morning we were transported back to the Glencoe Mountain Resort in mist and rain and started the challenging walk down the glen, up the Devil's Staircase and over the range to beautiful Kinlochleven. The final day took us from Kinlochleven up and over another range of hills and down again to Fort William. Finally, we arrived at the official end of the walk, conveniently located opposite an espresso and ice cream shop.

⁹By British standards at least!



School children preparing to walk along a section of the West Highland Way near Crianlarich



Our accommodation was much more comfortable than this bothy.



Kathy and Jenny near Inversnaid (Loch Lomond), Scotland.



Kathy in Glen Coe, headed for the infamous, mist-shrouded Devil's Staircase.



2019: Kathy, Jenny and me at the finish post in Fort William of the West Highland Way. Photo: Michele Forrest.

Michele met us in Fort William and the next morning we all caught a train to Glasgow, en route for a non-walking holiday in the Greek Islands.

We found the reduced daily distances to be a recipe for something more like a holiday than an endurance event. Each day we arrived early enough to relax and have a look around. In sharp contrast to her attitude on finishing the more arduous Cornwall walk, Kathy announced in the icecream shop that she would like to do this walk again!

13.1.4 2022: Coast to Coast Walk

Rather than immediately heading back to Milngavie for another go at the West Highland Way, we hatched a plan to walk Wainwright's Coast-to-Coast from St Bees in Cumbria to Robin Hoods Bay in North Yorkshire, through the Lakes District, the Yorkshire Dales, the Pennines, and the North York Moors. It was supposed to happen in May 2020, but COVID-19 delayed it until September 2022.

We invited Miranda and Andy Rawlinson to come along too. They'd done the walk a few years before but were quite keen to do it again. When our English friend Stephen Robertson heard of our plan, he asked if we'd mind if he came too. He'd walked it with his late wife Judith almost 50 years before, just after Wainwright defined the walk in 1972.

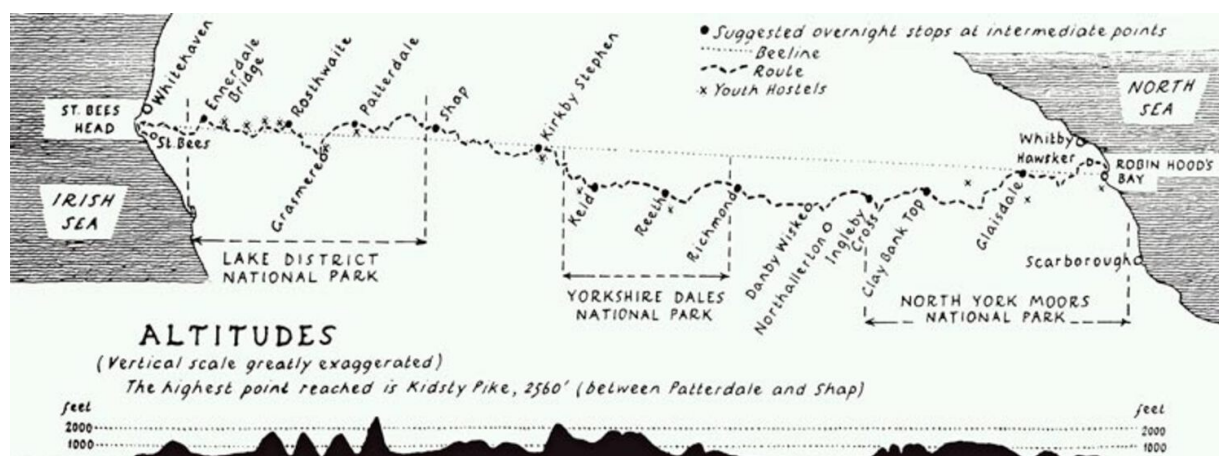
To everyone's dismay, Miranda and Andy contracted COVID-19 the day before the beginning of the walk! They became quite sick and were unable to do any of the walk. Hundreds of kilometres of training, mounds of cash, and months of dodging the virus, all wasted! Macs Adventures, who had booked everyone's accommodation and transfers, were of little help. Because of the late notice they just left Miranda and Andy's bookings in place. Letting the accommodation and transfer providers have the cash seemed fair enough but we thought that they should have at least advised them that the Rawlinsons would not be arriving. Stephen, Kathy and I fielded quite a few, "Where are the Rawlinsons?", and "We're expecting five bags but there are only three. What's going on?"

On being advised by someone that Miranda and Andy would not be arriving due to COVID, Stephen's booked accommodation for the first night on the trail advised that he would not be welcome. This was an example of the most extreme COVID caution since Stephen had never met Miranda and Andy! To their credit, Macs Adventures were able to come up with an alternative bed for the night.

Miranda and Andy were unable to get an appointment with an NHS doctor and unable to get a PCR test, which caused them to worry about travel insurance. It wasn't until December that they heard that Medibank would actually pay their claim.

In case you aren't familiar with Wainwright,¹⁰ he is arguably the Lakes District's most famous fellwalker, and the author of many guides to walking in the north of England.

Kathy has a voluminous collection of walking guides, covering many regions of the globe. By far the most impressive is Wainwright's *A Coast to Coast Walk*. Like his other guides it is neatly handwritten, and contains very clear hand-drawn maps and illustrations.



A hand-drawn Wainwright route map displayed on the cairn marking the start of the Coast to Coast.



2022: Left: Me, Stephen, and Kathy at the Coast to Coast start marker. (Photo: A kind passer-by.) Right: In case a walker lost heart, repurposed phone boxes were available along the route.

¹⁰https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alfred_Wainwright Accessed 19 July 2023.



Stephen and Kathy, nearing the Honister slate mine in the Lakes District.



Kathy became very fond of the different breeds of sheep we encountered on our northern trips, even if they sometimes blocked the walking path.



2022: Left: A very narrow lane in Kirkby Stephen. Right: One of the many peat bogs on Nine Standards Rigg. Kathy came to grief in one of them but managed to keep her boots.

Kirkby (silent middle 'k') Stephen is near the midpoint of the Coast to Coast. It is a lovely village with very comfortable accommodation and a great Indian restaurant. It's also a stop on the famously scenic Settle-Carlisle railway. Just before arriving there we followed a couple plus their dog across a field containing a bull. The bull couldn't have cared less, but several cows rushed to the defence of their calves and aggressively ran toward the intruders. A horse and a pony seemed to like the idea of a bit of 'biffo' and cantered down to join in the fun. The dog was unambiguously the cause of the bovine concern as, by the time we reached the scene, tranquil grazing had resumed.

Having grown up on an Australian sheep farm, Kathy finds it very hard to comprehend that official walking paths in Britain take walkers across fields with animals and crops and even among the barns, sheds and farmhouses. Mind you, I did see a cartoon of a farmer saying, "You can cross my fields for free. It's my bull that charges."

Leaving Kirkby Stephen we climbed steeply up Nine Standards Rigg. Rigg is the local name for a ridge, and the standards are a collection of giant stone cairns. There were great views but also expansive areas of peat bogs. It was often very hard to find the best path through them and we engaged in a lot of prodding and tentative stepping. We had read stories of walkers trapped up to their shoulders in smelly mud, but we got through relatively unscathed apart from a modicum of mud encrustation. At one point Kathy went in up to her knee but, with a little help, was able to extract herself without sacrificing her boots to the mud.

Safely over the rigg, we descended into Ravenseat for a cream tea. Ravenseat is the home of Amanda Owen, known as *The Yorkshire Shepherdess*.¹¹ In the UK she is famous through television and books for employing traditional farming methods in beautiful Upper Swaledale. Somehow, despite all her other activities, she has managed to produce and raise nine children. Two of them served us scones and beverages from a caravan next to the farmhouse.

Satisfactorily re-energised, we continued on to our night's accommodation outside the tiny village of Keld. We took a short cut across fields and over a narrow bridge over Stonesdale Beck. Eventually the path disappeared, or we lost it, and after fighting our way through bracken on a steep slope, had to clamber over a collapsed drystone wall and a barbed wire fence in order to reach the Pennine Way.

¹¹<https://www.yorkshireshepherdess.com/> Accessed 19 July 2023.



Near Frith Lodge, Keld. Photo: Kathy

It was all worth it. Frith Lodge¹² was our favourite of all the places we stayed. It's a fantastic renovation of ancient farm buildings carried out by experienced walkers Neil and Karen who set out to create a B&B specifically designed for walkers. On arrival Karen immediately saw or smelled the

¹²<https://www.frithlodgekeld.co.uk/> Accessed 19 July 2023.

peat mud adhering to Kathy's trousers and offered to wash them. "Bless you darling, you've brought us some peat!" She also took our boots and dried them. Comfortable room, comfortable guest lounge with magnificent views and a choice of drinks, gourmet dinner and breakfast around a big shared table, lovely photos and sketches on the walls. We loved it.



2022: After 325km of walking we reached the finish of the Coast to Coast and threw our pebbles from St Bees into the North Sea here at Robin Hood's Bay. Photographer unknown.

13.2 Other holiday adventures

Kathy has taken quite a few 'adventurous' holidays, mostly with me. An exception was a two week holiday she took in Ireland after accompanying me to a conference in Pisa, and while I slaved away for Microsoft in an office in London. She hired a car and took it down many a single-track road, giving herself extensive practice reversing, and having to learn to precisely place her car's wheels.

Together, we've explored many islands in the far north: Iceland (twice), Greenland, the Faroes, Shetland and the Outer Hebrides. Oh, and it's not an island but we also went to Churchill on Hudsons Bay in northern Canada. Kathy loves the scenery, the wildlife, the adventure, and the ability to avoid huge crowds of [other] tourists.

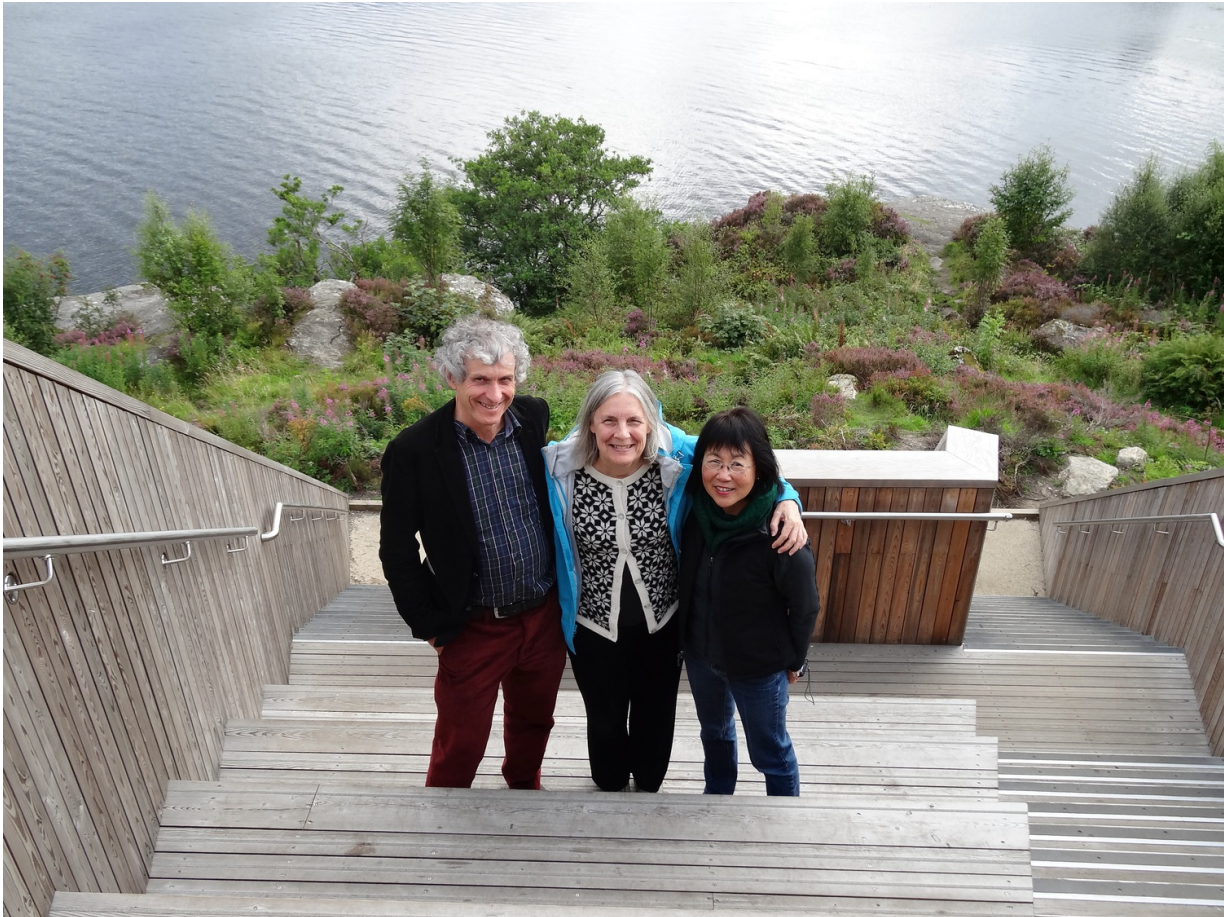
13.2.1 2015: Scotland, Iceland, Spain, France, England

Our friend Peter McGregor was an astronomer who had been in charge of designing and building instruments for the Gemini telescopes in Hawaii and Chile. Tragically, Peter contracted a nasty form of cancer and died in March 2015. Peter had strong ancestral connections to the Speyside area of Scotland. One of his ancestors had been a boatman in Loch Insh and there was also a family connection to a Speyside whisky distillery. In my eulogy at Peter's funeral I concluded by asking anyone

passing by Loch Insh to have a wee dram in Peter's memory. At the end of the service, Peter's wife Gim came up to me and said, "Well, when are we going to do that?"

Gim, Kathy and I arranged European tours later that year which overlapped in Scotland, and we spent several days at Boat of Garten near Loch Insh. From there we went searching for the distillery. Google Maps took us on a beautiful, heather-surrounded long road to nowhere, and we ended up obtaining a Speyside single malt and some ceremonial glasses from somewhere else. These we used for a ceremonial toast on the shores of Loch Insh.

We continued with some more exploration of Scotland before parting ways at Glasgow Airport, Gim en route for Greece and Kathy and I for Reykjavik.



2015: Me, Kathy, and Gim near Arrochar on the western side of Loch Lomond. Photographer unknown.

Travelling with Icelandair, we were treated to tourist videos, one of which told us that there are actually scheduled air services to Greenland. Yes, Greenland!

Another informed us that we could descend an Icelandic volcano. Excited, I booked a ticket from onboard the plane. Kathy wasn't at all interested in engaging in this activity and she laughed when I later confessed that I had misplaced the decimal point when converting from krona to dollars. I thought that the price was quite reasonable, but changed my mind when it turned out to be ten times as much. Eventually high winds caused cancellation and I got my money back.

Iceland itself was stunning. We loved Reykjavik's rainbow streets, arresting architecture – Hallgríms Church, Harpa concert hall, to name but two – and public art. Like millions of others we journeyed to Blue Lagoon and swam in its geothermal waters. We also signed up for an Iceland Golden Circle tour. It included geysers, giant waterfalls, a geothermal hothouse, and Þingvellir,¹³ the world's oldest parliament. We swam at a facility providing baths at a wide choice of temperatures, we ate icecream at a farm watched by the cows who produced the milk, and we had a meal at a rustic restaurant.

¹³Thingvellir if you're not familiar with the Icelandic alphabet.

One of the things which attracted Kathy to the tour was the advertised possibility of seeing the aurora borealis, but the sky was cloudy so the guide provided an alternative. Instead of looking skyward, we crawled through a lava tube at midnight. The height of the tube was just enough to crawl through and floor was solidified lava, hard and smooth but with sharp protrusions. A severe test for Kathy's knees! Says Kathy:

Well, it wasn't helped by the fact that I'd taken a fall in the cave before we reached the narrow section, injuring my knees and hands as I made a rolling landing on the floor. These were the very parts of my anatomy required to move through the tube. I seem to recall that this was another occasion when I received a round of applause from my fellow travellers.

We also took a tour in a small van along the south coast of Iceland, to the one-of-a-kind Jökulsárlón glacier lagoon. Icebergs calving off a small-ish glacier float about in a lagoon before either melting or crossing a sandbar to the sea. We inspected the bergs close up in an amphibious bus and delighted in the diversity of appearance of the bergs: some black from volcanic eruptions; some crystal clear; and the rest in a broad palette of blues.

Driving in Iceland is subject to weather challenges, even on the main highway around the island. Kathy was impressed by the weather indicator at the top of a pass which showed windspeed of 100 km/hr. I think the speed was much lower than that for most of our journey but we still saw U-shaped waterfalls. The water fell for tens of metres and was then blown upwards.



2015: Þingvellir, Iceland.

13.2.2 2018: Isle of Arran

Kathy's wrecked knees have caused problems, even without the stress of long distance walking. In 2018 when we stayed in a B&B on the Isle of Arran, in the Firth of Clyde, Kathy enjoyed a soak in a lovely deep claw-foot bath but was totally unable to get out of it. Just as well I hadn't gone out exploring!

This was the day after we climbed Arran's Goatfell mountain. It's 'only' 874m high but we started from sea level, and once we reached the serious walking bit near the top, we were enveloped in thick fog and a wind strong enough to blow us sideways.¹⁴ Seriously hindered on the descent by her knees, Kathy made very slow progress. We were touched by the kindness of walkers less than half her age who offered to take her pack and render any help she needed.

¹⁴If you don't believe me, check out <http://david-hawking.net/movies/KathyGoatFell.mov> Accessed 19 July 2023.



2015: Kathy at Jökulsárlón (Glacier Lagoon) on the south coast of Iceland. The black on one of the bergs is due to a long-ago volcanic eruption.



Icebergs from Jökulsárlón make their way across a bar to the sea and many are washed back onto the black sand beach.

13.2.3 2018: Faroe Islands

On the same holiday we experienced similar kindness on descent from the slightly higher Mount Unpronounceable (Slættaratindur, 880m) on the island of Eysturoy in the Faroe Islands. Young Americans, unlike their then narcissistic, self-absorbed president, were very forthcoming with offers of help when Kathy's knees were struggling on the very steep descent.

Scenery on the Faroes is incredibly stunning, with dramatic landscapes wherever you look. Driving is something of a challenge as many of the roads are very narrow and flanked by unprotected drop-offs. Our B&B host in Vagar warned us about sudden changes in the weather. She said we were in the 'land of maybe'. "You think you are flying back to Scotland on Thursday – maybe, maybe not." Despite these minor detractions, Kathy is convinced that the Faroe Islands are among the most beautiful landscapes on earth.



2018, Faroe Islands: Colourful houses in the village of Gjógv.



2018: On the summit of Slættaratindur, Faroe Islands. Photo: A kind fellow walker.



2018: A view from Slættaratindur, showing a typical Faroese landscape.



2018: Gásadalur (Goose Valley), Faroe Islands.

13.2.4 2018: Iceland and Greenland

Our second trip to Iceland was partly motivated by a desire to fly to Greenland. There was a choice of destinations and we chose Ilulissat. The main Jakobshavn glacier¹⁵ near Ilulissat is the world's fastest flowing (20 - 35m per day) and it calves around 20 billion tonnes of icebergs each year, some a kilometre high. It may be the origin of the iceberg which sank the Titanic.

Did You Know?

According to experts the Ilulissat ice shelf on the west coast of Greenland is now believed to be the most likely place from which the Titanic iceberg originated. At it's mouth, the seaward ice wall of Ilulissat is around 6 kilometres wide and rises 80 metres above sea level.

Panel from <https://titanicfacts.net/titanic-iceberg> Accessed 19 July 2023.

When flying into Reykjavik we landed at Keflavik airport, a long drive from the town. However, there is another airport within the town and our flight to Ilulissat left from there – we wheeled our suitcases to the airport! This is one of the many island airports converted from a WWII British/ American airbase. Much less crowded and more pleasant than LAX or LHR! We were warned that sometimes strong head winds forced planes to stop at another closer airport in Greenland, but this didn't happen to us.

Kathy was mesmerised as we flew across the massive (but shrinking) Greenland ice cap.



The Ilulissat cemetery. Photo: Kathy

¹⁵https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ilulissat_Icefjord Accessed 19 July 2023.

The major dints and scrapes peppering the steel barrier along the road into Ilulissat from the airport provide ample evidence of how difficult it is to drive on ice. Hopefully the town cemetery located along the same road is not further evidence of the same thing. We were able to have a good look as we walked from the airport into town, wheeling our cases.

Prominent signs around the Ilulissat coastline implore visitors to stay at least 20 metres vertically above the water for fear of huge tidal waves generated by a massive iceberg calving. We obeyed this instruction when we went walking, and also memorised instructions on what to do if suddenly enveloped by thick fog. Fogs there can last for days.

One remarkable feature of the town is the large number of sled dogs, chained up on expanses of rock, out of reach of each others' jaws.

We went to sign up for a tourist excursion to a glacier which started from Ilimanaq, a tiny settlement across Disko Bay from Ilulissat – not the Jakobshavn because it was far too dangerous, but a smaller, slower moving one. The ferry from Ilulissat which would normally take us to the excursion was fully booked that day, but the Tourist Bureau contacted the owner of a small boat and arranged for us to go with him.

There were several of us on the boat, all outfitted in survival suits, and probably all of us a little bit apprehensive about tackling huge icebergs and freezing water in such a small craft – the Titanic was much larger, and look what happened to it! The Greenlander at the helm was totally unconcerned, making mobile phone calls while bumping into icebergs smaller than cars and dodging ones whose above-water size was similar to that of a ten-story apartment block.

To Kathy's concern, halfway across the bay, our pilot stopped the outboard motor and removed the cover, fearing it was overheating. Another boat drew alongside and there was a conversation about our engine. After a while it was decided that there was nothing to worry about and we continued our journey.

We were making slow progress, so our captain phoned the tour company and told them that we were running late but would be there in 20 minutes. I had Google Maps open and could see that a more realistic estimate was 90 minutes!

Fortunately it turned out that the delay was not a big problem, since Kathy and I were the only paying customers on the excursion. On arrival we jumped onto a very fast boat, sitting on pommel horses while zooming across the water. From there we transferred to a four-wheel-drive Polaris all-terrain vehicle and churned our way over a ridge to another body of water, before transferring to another boat and having lunch in front of the gentle glacier which we were later able to walk on, carefully dodging crevasses.

Glacier walking was a wonderful experience and we arrived back in Ilimanaq excited and amazed at what we had experienced. Even more amazing was that we were now to be treated to a gourmet meal at KOKS, a 2-star Michelin restaurant, operating out of an ancient wooden whaling hut in Ilimanaq. What I believe to be our only experience of a Michelin-star restaurant was delicious, delightful and totally incongruous.

Returning to Reykjavik after our Greenland adventure we hired a car and explored the western side of Iceland, starting with the Snæfellsjökull volcano made famous by Jules Verne's *Journey to the Centre of the Earth*. Kathy, like many others, is enchanted by puffins and we travelled on an adventurous road to the cliffs of Látrabjarg at the western extremity of not only Iceland but Europe, in search of them. We walked several kilometres without seeing any only to discover a pair on our return, within metres of the car!

The landscapes in north-west Iceland are dramatic but without the signs of volcanic activity which typify much of the island. We stayed for a couple of days in the dramatic scenery of Ísafjörður. One day we made the steep climb up to the Troll Seat and on another we walked along the coastal road to Bolungarvík, population less than 1000. In 1950 this road provided the first land link to the fishing industry in Bolungarvík. Despite quite a few snow sheds, the road was mercilessly pounded by avalanches and rock falls. In 2010 a five and a half kilometre tunnel under the mountains was completed at enormous cost to bypass the coastal road.



2018: Ilulissat, Greenland. Crossing iceberg-filled Disko Bay in a small boat, all of us dressed in survival suits. Some of the icebergs were even bigger than this one.



Transferring from the [orange] boat which took us across Disko Bay to the care of Diskobay Tours. Our captain is in orange. The white boat is the one he consulted about the overheating motor.



Kathy in different protective gear, about to board the Polaris all-terrain vehicle.



"Mind the crevasse!" Kathy and me on the safe glacier at Sarqardleq.



KOKS restaurant at Ilimanaq, exterior view and table inside.



Driving conditions in Iceland are sometimes less than ideal. Here we wait in fog for road workers to finish repairing major damage to the highway.



Climbing up to the Troll Seat across the fjord from Ísafjörður.



One of the many landslip sites on the Bolungarvik road.

On our return we were a little perturbed at the sight of a huge earthmoving machine being used to completely close off one end of a snowshed with a giant tarpaulin. If access to the snowshed was being denied we would have only very unpalatable options for returning to Ísafjörður.

Of course we needn't have worried. The tarpaulin was being set up for use as a projection screen. Inside we met the makers of a documentary film about the history, danger, and importance of the road. A screening was scheduled for that evening but we didn't relish walking back again and settled for purchasing a DVD. I'm sure we have it somewhere.

13.2.5 2018: Shetland

The last destination on our 2018 tour of the northern islands was Shetland. Compared to the Faroes it is rather vertically challenged but provided a very interesting visit, starting at Sumburgh airport, where traffic lights and a boomgate controlled vehicular traffic across the main runway. Shortly after that was an iron-age broch¹⁶ and a 4,000 year old settlement capped by the house of the Viking Jarl. A little further on were the impressive cliffs of Sumburgh Head, home to large numbers of seabirds.

The town of Lerwick seemed very familiar from the *Shetland* television series. We saw a sign to the Procurator Fiscal's office and half-expected to see Rhona, Tosh and Jimmy Perez coming out of the door. According to a local we spoke to, other locals were upset by geographical inaccuracies in the TV series. He responded, "So you're happy to accept dozens of murders occurring in our tiny population but it's unforgivable to film on Yell and say it's Unst?"

We saw quite a lot of signs relating to Up Helly Aa,¹⁷ the festival featuring a torch-lit procession and the burning of a galley, but we were there at quite the wrong time.

¹⁶<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Broch> Accessed 19 July 2023.

¹⁷<https://www.uphellyaa.org/> Accessed 19 July 2023.



Sumburgh Airport, Shetland: Kathy was very surprised to find traffic lights on the main runway.



The Procurator Fiscal for Shetland has an office in this building in Lerwick.

We took a ferry over to the island of Papa Stour (the Priest's Island) and walked all round the coast line. Silly Dave failed to download the Google maps but the red line of a GPX trail and a moving blue dot on our phone were sufficient to keep us on the path and away from dangerous cliffs. One hazard we hadn't expected was being attacked by great skuas, known locally as 'bonxies'. These large birds would start about 500m away from us and fly very fast at us at about a metre above ground, pulling up at the last possible moment. Kathy was glad that they targetted me, rather than her.

We also took a guided wildlife tour on the island of Unst. To get there required two ferry journeys, first to Yell and then to Unst. We had hoped to see otters but had to make do with a huge colony of gannets at the National Nature Reserve of Hermaness, and the odd Shetland pony roaming about the islands.



Shetland ponies roaming the island of Unst.



Kathy doing a Kate Winslett on a Viking longship on Unst.



Kathy was interested in this display of Fair Isle jumpers in Lerwick, but only as inspiration for her own craft. (Fair Isle is in the Shetland archipelago but we weren't able to get there.)



Tilted basalt columns on Staffa's smaller sibling.

13.2.6 Other island adventures

There are many, many other island landscapes that Kathy has loved, and many other islands she's visited. Among them, Skye, Kerrera, Mull, Iona and Staffa off Scotland, and Mallorca, Corsica, Sifnos, and Santorini in the Mediterranean. While resisting the temptation to turn this book into a travelogue, let me mention Kathy's love of the Island of Staffa and Fingal's Cave.¹⁸ As well as its amazing geological beauty, it had friendly puffins.

13.2.7 2019: Churchill, Manitoba

After visiting our friends Sally and Jim in Saskatoon, Kathy and I flew to Winnipeg and took the very slow train to Churchill on Hudson Bay. We'd hoped to see polar bears and beluga whales but had to make do with belugas and large, loud and very annoying insects. There was no doubt that polar bears were about, but when we took a ride on a tundra buggy in an unsuccessful search for them, they appeared in town; when we were in town they entertained riders on the tundra buggy.

We were told that the young woman who had sold us our tundra buggy tickets had had her scalp partly torn off by a bear and only managed to escape alive when a man hit the bear with a shovel.

In Churchill all car and house doors are left unlocked to provide safety for anyone encountering a bear. There is a polar bear jail for bears which make a nuisance of themselves in town. When first opened, prisoners were well fed, but when roaming bears broke into the jail to get food, the policy had to be changed.



2019, Churchill: Another beach you shouldn't walk on.

¹⁸<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Staffa> Accessed 19 July 2023.



2019, Churchill: bear-proof concrete refuse bins.

On our last day in Churchill we rented an old wreck of a car from our hotel owner and drove out of town to give a bit of excitement to the rural biting insects. They certainly became excited, following the car at more than 30km/hr, as we descended further along this rarely traveled track, bushes scraping on both sides of the car. After eventually choosing discretion ahead of valour and turning around, Kathy asked me to stop for a photo. Following my usual habit I activated the foot-operated park brake.

Unfortunately, pushing the pedal again didn't release the brake, as on a Toyota, but applied it harder. I explored everywhere I could think of to find the release but failed. There was no phone reception so I allowed the enormous V8 engine to overpower the brake and we crawled along to the accompaniment of warning beeps. Eventually Kathy found one bar of mobile reception and rang the hotel. The owner told us he'd never applied a parking brake, but he had another GM Yukon and went to see if he could find the release. It was a clunky, agricultural lever hidden up high behind the dash. And yes, we did make it back in time for our flight.

Chapter 14

What can we say about Kathy?

Pat McGorry, AO, 2010 Australian of the Year

Kathy Griffiths is a leader who in mental health research was ahead of her time in so many ways. As a pioneer in e-mental health she anticipated and had the vision to build the complementary world of virtual and digital mental health which is now becoming a routine feature of mental health care. She also catalysed the consumer focus in mental health care and research and was a strong advocate for this vital stream of endeavour. Her early retirement was a loss for our field and her collegiality is still missed by her many friends and colleagues.

Mike Kyrios, former Director of ANU Research School of Psychology

I'm so pleased to be able to contribute a few words about Kathy Griffiths to commemorate her past, current and ongoing contributions to psychological sciences.

Kathy is someone I knew of long before I actually met her. I knew of her standing as an excellent researcher, the impact of her work nationally and internationally, her support for causes that we shared and, most importantly, her reputation as wonderful human being. She had been a leader in areas that I researched, and someone that I cited frequently. However, Kathy's impact on my life and the lives of my closest colleagues and friends went beyond her intellect.

My first personal contact with Kathy was just prior to my stint at the Australian National University (ANU) in Canberra when I took up the role of Director of the Research School of Psychology. Kathy was not located in that School at the time but we shared many interests in areas such as mental health and wellbeing, public mental health, online psychological treatments or e-therapy, the experiences of mental health consumers, help seeking behaviours of consumers of mental health services, and mental health literacy in the general community. It was inevitable that we would meet eventually.

I actually don't recall who reached out first to make contact with each other. It's entirely possible that it was either of us. Nonetheless, within days of arriving in Canberra, my wife and I were at Kathy and David's home enjoying a home cooked meal...and what a meal it was! Traditional Greek avgolemono soup (egg-lemon-chicken-rice), my absolute favourite, made in accordance with the strict Greek recipe, just like my mother used to make. Now that's what I call a welcome and certainly something that reflected our shared family/cultural values/interests and cemented our collaboration into the future.

As it turned out, we also shared a vision for public health research in the psychological area that I believe still has ongoing impacts at the ANU and beyond. When Kathy decided she needed a break from her university leadership role so as to take stock and focus on her priorities, it was an easy decision to ask her to join the Research School of Psychology as an Emeritus Professor. However, there were a few organisational and bureaucratic challenges to overcome.

As a priority, we needed to facilitate the ongoing viability of ANU's "e-hub" mental health web-based services such as MoodGYM, e-couch and Blue Pages, services for which Kathy was an integral instigator and for which she was responsible at the time. These were the world's leading e-based mental health programs and information services. Given Kathy's departure, it was imperative that we found a way to maintain them so as to maintain access to the public and for researchers across the globe. Despite the challenges and through the easy collaborative spirit and trust we'd established, the services were preserved, allowing them to continue to evolve. To date, they maintain their ongoing leading presence nationally and internationally, thanks to the arrangements we established and the collaborations that Kathy had previously established. Thank you Kathy on behalf of the consumers and researchers who have continued to access those services!

Naturally, such impacts don't occur without the support of other researchers and contacts. Kathy is an amazingly generous spirit who facilitated contacts with other researchers. For me personally, Kathy helped me recruit my closest current collaborators, inclusive of one of her PhD students who ended up as my post-doc when I moved to Flinders University (Dr. Kathina Ali) and my ANU Postdoc (Associate Professor Dan Fassnacht) who also followed me to Flinders. Without Kathy's generosity to not only myself, but also to Dan and Kathina, our own recent accomplishments would not have been possible. Such is the spirit of Kathy, to whom we will forever owe a great debt.



Dan Fassnacht and Kathina Ali, Glenelg SA, Dec 2022

Kathy has made enormous contributions to psychological science, to mental health and well-being research and services, and to the careers of countless individuals and research groups across Australia and the world. We are all in her debt for those contributions. Kathy is proof that the greatest researchers are those that make such great impacts but also maintain their humanity, humility, generosity, humour, and sense of community.

John Cunningham, former Deputy Director, CMHR

Before moving to Australia to work with Kathy and her group, I knew of her ground-breaking work on Internet interventions for mental health concerns. Once I arrived, it quickly became clear that Kathy's work is driven by a desire to provide more options for care for people with mental health difficulties, and to reduce the stigma that people with mental health experience. However, looking back on my time working with Kathy, what I remember most is her laughter and joy in the little things - like learning that I had knitted the sweater I was wearing. All the best Kathy.

Gabriele Bammer, former Director of ANU Research School of Population Health

One thing that stays with you about Kathy is that laugh - joyous, infectious, distinctive. We were fellow-travellers for many years, with a shared interest in including people's lived experience in our research, although the lived experience we were interested in was different. Nevertheless we agreed that it wasn't possible to understand a 'problem', without the perspectives of those experiencing it. For a few years, as Director of the Research School of Population Health, I became Kathy's supervisor allowing me to gain a deeper appreciation of her care for members of her staff who lived with mental illness. It's a tribute to Kathy that many of those staff members have thrived in the academic world. She can also take at least some credit that work with people with lived experience has become mainstream.

A February 2015 message sent by Margaret Condonis, Director, The Family Relationships Service, Macquarie St, Sydney

Hi Kathy,
For years I have wanted to thank you for the gift of your supervision and mentoring when I was a clinical psych student at Royal Canberra Hospital. You had a profound impact on me personally and professionally.
I particularly remember the kindness and respect you had for your clients, and the curiosity and determination to understand what was happening to them. Along with Pat Pentony, you two most profoundly impacted my practice of therapy.
Congratulations on your stellar career, particularly the recent E work. I recall in the early 1990s having a heated disagreement with the NSW Registration Board about offering 'E' services. I was consulting to an organisation based in Sydney but offering a State service. We were trying to develop electronic devices including video conferencing so that rural and remote clients could access this service.
I'm so pleased that this kind of work and programs like MoodGYM exist now, thanks to professionals like you.
Margaret

Julia Reynolds, Clinical Psychologist

I had the pleasure of working with Kathy from 2008 – 2015 at the Centre for Mental Health Research at ANU. Kathy is a deeply compassionate and generous person with a wicked sense of humour. An inspiring colleague and leader, Kathy has a unique blend of intellect, scientific rigour, originality and lucidity that brought clarity to the most complicated of problems. This, along with her capacity to approach the messy realities of human vulnerability with great determination and never-ending optimism meant that she has left a positive mark on students, colleagues, university systems and people living with mental health concerns around the world.

Ingrid Ozols AM: Reflections from a friend

I first met Kathy about 20 years ago, when I was taking my first steps in a dramatically different direction, that of mental health advocacy. I walked through CMHR corridors and for some reason gravitated to Kathy's office. I instantly felt like I'd known her forever. It felt like a form of imprinting!

Kathy is incredibly intelligent but holds her intelligence in a humble way – not at all pretentious. Unlike some intelligent women, she brings other women up rather than putting them down. She could always answer my questions or refer me to someone who could.

Kathy's very generous with herself, possibly too generous for her own wellbeing. People are drawn to her and there's just something about her that makes me love this lady. I have a sense of her being a safe zone, and that's something I don't have with many people. Kathy helped me when I was in a very dark place and has been an important part of my life ever since we met. We don't communicate all that often but each time the conversation continues without a hiccup.

Another illustration of Kathy's caring side occurred at a Blue Voices meeting in Melbourne. An interstate delegate collapsed and Kathy looked after her and accompanied her to Epworth Hospital in the ambulance.

I remember many happy dinners with Kathy, enlivened by her laughter. We were sitting together at a farewell dinner for John McGrath, and after I'd had a few drinks, Ian Hickie asked me to say a few words. Shocked, I went to the toilet and wrote some notes on toilet paper. It must have gone alright because John asked me for the toilet paper.

On another occasion, Kathy and I accidentally bumped into each other in Helsinki, neither of us knowing that we'd registered for the same conference. We went off and had a memorable dinner.

In my opinion, Kathy's two greatest pioneering contributions in the field of Mental Health are the online interventions like MoodGYM and the involvement of consumers in mental health research and priority setting. ANU's Consumer Research Unit, set up by Kathy and Tony Jorm was initially funded by Beyond Blue, which later set up Blue Voices to represent consumers. (I was its chair.) The involvement of consumers is now firmly established in mental health research, in workplace policy formation, and in the suicide prevention movement.

Kathy also set up BrolgaNet, an openly accessible network for sharing consumer oriented mental health information, and Blue Board, the online mental health discussion forum. E-peer support has subsequently taken off, and LifeLine now operates online forums whose popularity grew greatly during COVID lockdowns.

I must admit that I did a couple of things which were at least partly aimed at getting Kathy involved. When I came to Canberra for Mental Health Council or other meetings I always stayed at ANU's University House, so I could easily drop in on Kathy. Bernard McNair and I proposed the idea of a sub-group of Blue Voices, bringing together academic researchers who were themselves mental health consumers. Kathy took this on, came up with the name Blue Boffins, and chaired the initiative.

Here's to you Kathy, one 'blue sunshine' to another.

Kylie Bennett, General Manager, e-hub Health

Kathy has had a huge impact on me both professionally and personally – as a mentor, supervisor and as a friend. Kathy is highly intelligent, sharp, kind and empathetic. She always seeks to understand first – whether that is a problem to be solved, a situation to be managed, or a person to respond to. She has taught me that strong leadership is best mixed with flexibility and humility. Oh, and also that semicolons and colons need to be used carefully and correctly!

Erika Griffiths-Hawking, daughter-in-law

Writing about Mum seems like an easy task. She has many great qualities. An abundance of words come to mind when I think of her, yet, none of them seem enough. For the sake of this book, I will dial it down. However, please keep in mind that whatever I say isn't even a quarter of what she truly is.

Mum is like a ray of sunshine; warm and calm, bright and glowing. She is like a gentle breeze, soothing my worries with a touch of force when the need arises. She is like fire; my source of light and inspiration.

Mum is the epitome of what mothers should be – caring, loving, understanding, accepting and supportive. She reminds me of my strengths, things I often take for granted about myself. She teaches me to see my weaknesses as tools to improve not as obstacles I need to overcome. You see, Mum may be horrible with plants but she has the power to nurture growth in humans – She is awesome but one can't have it all!

Mum is the glue that binds our family and I am forever grateful to have her in my life.



Kathy is an exceptional researcher, combining creativity, intelligence, intense focus, good judgment, and determination with top-notch skills in writing and editing. Her career was severely hampered by CFS, and by lack of opportunities in the academic system. For years she was underemployed and underpaid. Her decades-long battle with depression didn't help and nor did her lack of self-confidence (except when standing up for someone else!) Her achievements, despite all that, are remarkable – you've read about some of them in this book, particularly in the first chapter. Within and without her career, she has lived a life of caring and kindness. At school and university she assisted at camps for kids with disabilities. She helped children with learning difficulties. Her work as a neuropsychologist was aimed at helping people with brain injuries and strokes. She's helped many friends through crises. She helped her students with wise advice and perceptive editing. I have observed the great gratitude expressed by many of them – my students sometimes thanked me and said nice things, but I've never received the heartfelt testimonials that Kathy has.

Kathy is very loyal to her family and her team and has an innate commitment to doing the right thing, regardless of cost. She has stood up for colleagues under attack, and shielded more vulnerable staff members from slings and arrows. Of course, she despises the American politicians who so blatantly lie in order to gain political advantage, and who seem to have no commitment to Truth or Justice. Is this really the American Way?

Kathy lovingly tended her mother in her dying months and cared for her father over the years he lived with us. She has loved, cared for and supported our son Jack. I'm very grateful that, over 50 years, she has loved and supported me.

Appendices

Appendix A: Timeline for Kathy

1953	Born in Kew, Vic.
1959	Starts at Euroa Primary School.
1966	Starts at Euroa High School.
1972	Arrives at Garran Hall, ANU as an undergraduate..
1973	Starts living together with Dave in MacDonnell St, Yarralumla.
1974	Moves with Dave to Hovea St, O'Connor.
1975	Graduates with B.Sc Hons.
1976	Buys house with Dave in Gardiner St, Downer.
1982	Completes PhD.
1987	Jack Griffiths-Hawking born in Canberra, ACT.
1989	Buys house with Dave in Turner.
1997	Publication of <i>A Guide to Understanding Head Injury</i> .
2000	First employment at CMHR: Business Development Manager.
2000	Landmark BMJ paper on quality of information on mental health web sites.
2001	Launch of MoodGYM and BluePages.
2003	Launch of Depression and Anxiety Consumer Research Unit (CRU).
2004	Landmark RCT demonstrating effectiveness of MoodGYM.
200?	Launch of BlueBoard.
200?	Launch of e-Couch.
2007	Landmark paper on aviation safety.
2008	Promoted to Professor.
2008	Commencement of DHAC funding of online mental health services.
2010	RCT showing effectiveness of Internet Support Groups.
2012	Becomes Director of CMHR.
2016	Commercialisation of MH Guru after RCT validation.
2016	Retires.
2018	Walks South Cornwall Coast Path: Mousehole to Plymouth.
2019	Walks West Highland Way: Milngavie to Fort William.
2022	Walks Wainwright's Coast to Coast: St Bees to Robin Hood's Bay.
2023	Walks Queen Charlotte Track, South Island, NZ.

Appendix B: Pat's memories of Creighton State School

Creighton S.S. 2644. by **Patricia (Pat) Alice Griffiths**

At the junction of the Hume Freeway and the Creighton Siding Road a rock stands sentinel over the site of the former Creighton State School No. 2644. The area once occupied by the school building and garden is covered by several feet of earth filling topped with bituminous paving. Heavy transports and cars roll over the grounds which previously only knew the light steps of children or the occasional curious fox, rabbit or bird searching for sustenance or just going about their own affairs.

My schooldays there began in 1929 before my fifth birthday and continued until the end of 1934 - a period dominated by the Great Depression. Those six years are clear in my memory and the sights sounds and smells of those days are still with me even though the old school and some of those children of yesteryear have gone forever.

From the outside the school was much as other rural schools of the era. It stood square, a few yards from the boundary fence of the old Sydney Road with the main windows in a bank on the north wall letting in the light and the heat, and no doubt offering little temptation for the idler to watch passing traffic. Very little travelled the dirt road to the Creighton Station. Maybe one of the older pupils who sat down that end may have seen "old" Arthur Halsall, pipe in mouth, cycling up to the Creighton station for the mail at around ten thirty A.M. The mail train was due at a quarter to eleven, and maybe if they cared to look again later they would see him cycling home with the paper and mail in time for lunch.

On the highway side there was an entrance porch and a skillion verandah probably added at a later date to cover the clothes hung on the hat and coat pegs. In my time this verandah had a wooden floor almost flat on the ground but earlier it was probably left bare, and later it was concreted. This concrete slab was the main evidence of the school site after the school was destroyed by fire. Under this verandah near the entrance porch and not far from the main door was a one casement type small paned window. The beginners sat down that end and by dint of standing up one could see any visitor approaching the porch, and the front door. This way the inspector or any stranger could be observed before he was heard to knock. This window was great for observing the traffic on the highway and if any vehicle with a different sound was heard in the distance somebody could make it his business to get up and retrieve a dropped pen just as the said vehicle was passing.

On the side facing Euroa, or the East, was another skillion veranda with an earth floor and the northern end boarded in for shelter. A few peep holes had appeared in that wall so "home" could be observed during a game of hidey. Many a cap or coat arm appeared around its edge and false alarm called. An iron chimney was centred in the eastern wall piercing the veranda roof and continuing up against the wooden wall of the school. This chimney was eventually to become the destroying agent of the old school. During my school days we leaned against it after the fire was lit inside to warm our behinds and hands, but after the fire was well established it became too hot to touch. I can remember it had been patched at about head height, and at one period the children could peer through an open hole to observe the teacher. A real dare devil could put his eye to the hole on the trip back from the toilet or maybe waggle a finger to attract the attention of his fellow pupils.

Around on the north side were the big windows with small panes and a tank at either corner. The north side didn't see as much activity as the highway or the chimney side.

The west side had another narrow small paned casement style window on the Sydney Road end. Several school photographs have been taken with this area as background. The back door was in this wall. In my day it was covered by a porch which contained a built in box to hold the gardening tools. Another skillion veranda with a raised wooden floor continued on from the porch

and covered another widow behind the teachers desk. It was through this back door we made our escape to the toilets or out for a drink during the long hot summer days. I cannot remember if a drink was considered a reasonable excuse, but the toilet excuse could be employed so long as it was not overdone.

The outside of the building was painted a muddy orange - a paint much favoured by the P.W.D in those days. No doubt it was a "stone"; mid stone, dark stone and light stone seemed to dominate the paint charts. Anyway it didn't show the dust and the painters must have done their job well because I cannot remember it being repainted. The roof was left in its rude galvanized state with the iron chimney a black mark on the side wall.

The children formed up in two ranks at the call of the school bell, a small hand bell usually wielded by the teacher. The teacher back to the school faced the children on the Eastern side, with the taller boys and girls on her left going down in size to the toddlers. The girls formed the front row with boys directly behind the tallest boy and tallest girl were markers for their rows and we all took "our distance". The orders were "At Ease" - "Attention" - "Right Turn" - "Quick March" - "Right Wheel" and so in through the front door marched the croc. The bigger ones marched through the space between the desks and the black-boards and peeled off to their desks. The little ones followed behind and drifted to their places at the highway end. Each stood beside his desk which was shared between two, and at the signal started "The Road to Gundagai" accompanying their singing with the beat of their feet marching on the spot. Up and down went the feet and louder became the singing. If it was very hot then things dragged and the tone was set for the rest of the day. If the morning was frosty the feet came down "thump" to warm the toes in woollen socks and heavy boots. This ritual was carried out in the morning, after morning recess (play time), after lunch, and after afternoon recess. So four times a day the old school vibrated to the strains of "There's a Track Winding Back..."

The school floor was left bare and the lining boards were pale green. I think the school was originally divided with the front being the class room and the western part being the teachers living quarters. Some supporting posts had been left when the wall was removed. During the twenties and thirties blackboards were flush on the wall either side of the fire place. There was a space for a small table and chair for the teacher and an area between the blackboard and the front desks. Behind the rows of desks in the former living quarters was the teacher's high desk. This was probably the original, but I think the two seater desks with lift up tops probably replaced long desk. The lids were painted bottle green and bore the marks of ink stains, pen nibs, and pen knives. China ink wells filled the holes and were cleaned and re-filled each week. The ink was made from powder supplied by the Department mixed with water from the rain water tanks. Various bits and pieces found their way into the wells including blotting paper and a fly or two. Particularly nasty people filled their steel nibs by dipping deeply and then aiming at whatever they had chosen as a target. If the target happened to be an unspoilt page of a classmate, the strap could be produced from the high desk by the teacher.

The teacher's desk was tall and a high stool came with it. Like the pupils' desks it had a sloping top with the centre part lifting to show the records and the roll. The part in front of the hinged lid contained a cupboard, opened doors in the front. At the highway end of this area was a display table bought by the Committee. This was later used for ping pong. A few wooden forms supplied by the Committee were stored beside it and a regulation two-doored school cupboard stood near the back door. This contained the "library" sewing cards, chalks and departmental papers.

On the highway wall was a beautiful old barometer which was stolen before the school was destroyed. On the other side was a book on the Great War 1914-1918 in a beautifully carved wall case carved by Miss Florence Threlfall. I believe that was also stolen. On the ledges above the blackboard and the mantle piece were the vases. The Committee in my school days bought green fluted glass vases for the flowers the children brought to school. Above the mantelpiece was the Honour Board containing the names of past pupils who went to the 1914-18 war. The white ants had made a meal of the backing and this board was later replaced. The replacement, together with the desks, forms, table, teacher's desk and organ, was saved from the fire which destroyed the school. There were a couple of pictures showing long horned hairy Highland cattle. When church was held in the school in the thirties our church organ was moved in and it was great to have a teacher who could play to

accompany the childrens' singing.

A picture of the reigning king George V must have graced one wall, but it failed to leave a lasting impression on me. The interior of the school was dull and uninspiring, but we found it safe, and comfortable. It was our territory just as the school ground was our territory. We knew the boundary fences and once inside seldom ventured out until released at home time.

Outside the front porch close by the highway fence grew a cypress of medium height, its branches tipped with gold. It was probably planted on Arbor Day by the children of a previous generation, but by the time the children of the twenties and thirties entered school it had become a permanent feature with its straight trunk and spreading branches. It was always the home tree for the game of "hidey", or "hide and seek". The children knew all the trees and hidey spots. The silky oak against the fence further towards the creek was too thin to hide the smallest child. Nearby was a rather squat, thick-trunked red gum, a wattle and a red pincushion hakea, an exotic tree in this situation. It was probably the result of a past Arbor day planting but its red pincushion flowers and the following "duck" seed boxes delighted the children. They knew it as the "West Australia wattle".

The garden was on the west side of the building and was enclosed with a post and netting fence to foil the rabbits. Somebody had set it out as an English cottage garden with geometric shapes filling the rectangle. A larger shrub would be planted in a circular garden with paths following the curves and angles to make the whole like a mad maze. For these central plantings palms and oleanders were chosen. Near the entrance gate the old "may" flourished, flowering white in the spring. Only the really hardy plants survived as water was scarce and they had to survive the summer holidays without attention from the children. The children grew to learn the names of the hardy bulbs – jonquils, ixijs, "pepper and salt" which ran wild and spread to the roadside. Pig face was nurtured but as the types didn't produce flowers it wasn't very inspiring for the children to cultivate. I don't think any pupil learned to enjoy gardening in that plot. The ground was hard and on Friday afternoons the "forced" labour used tools like dutch hoes which made little impression on it.

North of the garden were more eucalypts with red gums growing close to the girls dunny which was situated near to the Creighton Road fence. A black lily flower christened "dunny flower" by the kids grew under the fence. It had the most terrible odour to attract flies which carried the pollen from flower to flower. A well worn track led from the back door of the school to the Girls. The Girls was painted to match the school and was distinguishable from the Boys by the shape of the roof. It was curved iron whilst the Boys was topped by a gable. The Boys was situated about fifty yards across the playground towards "West's" fence. The trees in that area were mostly box and the children rarely played down there.

About seventy yards east of the school stood the two box trees which were there years before white man chose that patch of ground for a school to educate his young. The one near the highway was hollow, and had a large opening facing the school. This tree was much loved by generations of Creighton children and marked the boundary of our play ground. We rarely had need to go beyond it. The area between it and the school was sandy and well worn. It was on this space we played our games. Steps and Stairs or Giant Steps, Capture the Standard, Prisoner's Base, Shinty, Cricket (both teams and one man cricket). Football (if someone produced a ball), Skippy, Hop-Scotch, Drop the Hanky, Trip the Finger, Green Gravel and Callings and probably others handed down through the generations. We were never at loss for a game. Marbles were played nearer the school and Oranges and Lemons near the hakea whilst a cleared space behind the garden was used to accommodate the advancing lines of children playing Nuts and May. A set of rope quoits were purchased and proved very popular during wet weather as the game could be played under cover of the veranda extending from the front porch. During this period bats and balls or any games equipment was considered a luxury. The school Committee did its best but the families had little enough for themselves. The aid to the teaching of geography was viewed with awe. It consisted of a globe representing the earth with a ping pong ball impaled by a wire attached near the base of the globe and following its curve so the "moon" would be opposite the equator. The sun was represented by a golden orb about the size of an orange set eighteen inches or so from the earth with its satellite moon. This was supposed to show us how the earth rotated giving night and day and how it revolved around the sun giving us the seasons, but I doubt if either teachers or pupils really understood the principles behind this

advanced piece of equipment. However, it probably impressed the inspector when he visited.

Inspectors' visits were viewed with fear and trepidation. The teachers always managed to instill into the pupils that he was coming to examine the students work, and I doubt if many of us realised the teacher was given a mark too. Word soon passed around when the inspector was in the district and we waited with growing nervousness until he finally walked across the threshold. During my primary school days I can only remember two inspectors - Mr. Bateman and Mr Cannon. Mr Bateman's most noticeable feature was a large paunch, and Jacky O'Neill made the most memorable and oft quoted observation "I bet if you stuck him with a knife – out would come beer and fish". I think that reduced Mr Bateman from a giant to a very ordinary human being. Mr Cannon seemed a gentle man, and to a small person he seemed very tall. I think the examinations he set were reasonable.

During my six years we had three teachers. Augustus Loftus Brennan was young, probably educated by the Brothers, and he seemed a friendly young man with a sense of humour. He looked rather like a shorter edition of Mike Walsh. I don't know if he was a good teacher, but his hand writing was fluid and he signed A.L.B. in our State Savings Bank books with a flourish which we tried to copy. Apparently his ear for music was not very good as during his time the only two songs in his repertoire - and ours - were "Pretty Little Pansy" and "The Harp that Once Through Tara's Hall". I grew up thinking that was a Welsh Song. He brought a small portable gramophone a few times, but I fail to remember any of the records. I suppose we sang "There's a track etc" for the inspector. We certainly knew that well enough and didn't need any accompaniment. Gus was good with pastels, so the children had some good examples to copy. We were not allowed to draw from imagination but were expected to make a copy of the subject set for that lesson – shape, shading, highlights – everything.

After Gus left Molly Short came to us for a brief stay. She enjoyed the children and took a small snap of us in the garden, giving each family a copy before she left. I think she was going to a convent, but I understand she died at an early age.

Miss Short was replaced by Lilian Gates, a lively bird-like lady. She was small and slim and had 'permed' hair and wore make-up, and joy of joys - she could play the organ and the banjo. She also played tennis and loved dancing. She brought something different into our lives. She was a 'city' girl. We still learned by rote. Tables were chanted, spelling, reading, arithmetic, grammar all had to be done, but we also practised for concerts, and maybe there were a few aids to learning introduced, and a little more free reading. However, she ran a pretty tight ship and we made fair progress.

The boys would do the heavy work like making the fires and the girls would do the dusting and flowers. Lil felt sorry for the children during the cold winters forced to sit outside and eat sandwiches. She had each bring a cup or mug and during the winter we had hot cocoa. Somebody brought a bottle of milk and the cocoa and sugar was possibly bought by the pennies contributed and the children took turns in mixing the sugar and cocoa in each cup ready for the water boiled in the kettle on the open fire.

The teacher used to open the school in the morning before 8.45 and shut it during the time he or she was away at Arthur Halsall's for lunch. During the time Miss Gates was at Creighton she bought an Austin Sports Car. It was a silver fish with red mud-guards and red upholstery. There was room for one passenger beside the driver and room for luggage in the tail behind the seat. The hood folded back and going over a rise in the road gave the same effect as the big dipper at Luna Park. She used to drive this to Melbourne at week-ends. No wonder she was sometimes late coming back. It must have been a four hour trip.

We had only one organised sports day. We didn't compete against other schools as we never had enough pupils to make up a team. We were not sexist. We all played the same games - cricket for all and Drop the Hanky for all. All went well for our organized sports until Ian Spencer broke his leg competing in the high jump. This ended the day and "Jill" spent some weeks in hospital. He had "chalky" bones it was said. Ian scored the nickname from a poem the kids liked about the Miller's cats. The cats went into the mill at night after the mice and in the morning out they came - the last being "one-eyed Jill", George Bowden became Pataudi during the tests as he was considered a good batsman and he was dark complexioned with curly black hair hence Pataudi after the Indian cricketer who played for England. Edgar Worland was Ted-Legs – a play on his name and George

Colclough was “cauli”, short for cauliflower. Unlike Longwood we didn’t “go in” for nick-names. Maybe we weren’t a very inventive lot.

From Lil’s concert I remember “The Wedding of the Painted Doll”. Jean Garside with her pretty fair curls was the bride, Phil. Bowden the groom and Ian Garside the preacher man. “Ten Little Nigger Boys” was played behind a curtain with black gloved hands and the tops of black socks pulled down over the faces as masks with holes for the eyes and red embroidered mouths. As each “nigger” boy met his fate he disappeared below the curtains. “Babes in the Wood” was sung by children behind gum boughs they were holding upright to represent trees, whilst the “babes” wandered about. This was sung very loudly as the singers felt their identity safe behind the branches. The girls also did an exercise with wire hoops covered with crepe paper and paper roses. It was fun and excitement preparing and giving a concert.

02 March 1993

Today we received a communication from the Labor candidate and I quote – “The G.S.T. will hit ordinary families in Creighton hard.”

We are virtually the only family left on this side of the Freeway and we are not ordinary. There are no children in the area, so I guess you could say “And no children sing”. The Halsalls, the Garsides, the railway workers, have gone and the last of the Worlands is departing soon. A few Threlfall descendants hang on, but the Earls, Graces, Bradys, Watkins and many others have left long ago. James Blundell is right when he sings:

*“The future is losing its bright ones each day,
And you can’t blame them for walking away.”*

Appendix C: Harold's Service to the Euroa/Longwood Community

Notes drafted by Pat as the basis for a possible award for Harold. He kept himself almost as busy as his daughter!

14.0.1 Fires

Harold Griffiths was a CFA fire fighter from 1953: Longwood Brigade, later Creighton's Creek, now Longwood again. He attended district fires including the 1957 Teneriffe fire, requisitioning a grader and using it to make a fire break – a first for the district.

With Reg, Clarrie and Geoff Halsall, he met the Longwood fire (1965) north of the town and saved John Berry's house and environs. He drove back through the fire, putting out bridges on the way, spent days alone with a tractor unit, on the western side putting out 'smokers' etc.

Through Euroa Shire Council he helped to get grant to replace the damaged bridges.

He conducted the CFA Sub-Base for Euroa group from home at Creighton from — to —. He initiated first responses against many fires and other incidents such as accidents, particularly on the Hume Highway.

He arranged for Euroa shire council to purchase UHF radio sets for emergency use, and encouraged purchase of Shire network.

In 1996, he inspected and arranged clearing of damage following storm (tornado) with State Government Member and helped secure finance to clear damage.

On closure of sub-base purchased truck and, at own expense, fitted same with outstanding equipment. He has been in early attendance at local fires and been able to help contain them. The truck was used on the Creightons Creek Fire¹, keeping the Longwood and Ruffy side contained. He spent days on that area.

Harold initiated with David Hawking the development of a computer program *Spot On!* for locating fires and was very early consulted about *FireScan* developed by Monash University.

14.0.2 Hospital

Pre-war and post-war, Harold worked as an engineer for a firm of hospital architects and engineers. Subsequently District Electrical and Mechanical Engineer for the Public Works Department, Victoria.

On transferring to the farm at Creighton for health reasons, he became involved with Euroa Bush Nursing Hospital and offered his services. He supervised improvements and extensions including kitchen, laundry, new lounge, and outpatients, rewiring of the building, sewerage and other works. Made a member in 1961 and was Trustee until the hospital was incorporated. He was a Committee Member for many years and endeavoured to make beds available for public patients.

14.0.3 Hostel

He prepared a submission and supervised planning. He was Chairman of the Committee.

14.0.4 Currie Homes

Harold prepared the original submission. Negotiated with Trustees with Neil McKernan and Ewen Cameron (federal MP). A success!

14.0.5 Deputy Shire Engineer

Was Euroa deputy shire engineer for three years – many significant bridges, kerb and channel and other works.

¹Now known as the Strathbogie Fire

14.0.6 Councillor, Shire of Euroa 1965–1975

See Cliff Halsall's *History of Local Government of Euroa*

Fought the Country Roads Board on the location of the Euroa bypass, and drafted many other submissions.

14.0.7 Civil Defence / State Emergency Service

Harold set up the structure and the operational parameters for the Euroa Sub-Region and became the first Controller of the unit. He initiated First Aid Classes. Dr Dunn was the first volunteer and received an OBE² for his response to the Southern Aurora derailment at Violet Town.

THE EUROA GAZETTE, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1965

**SHIRE OF EUROA—
CIVIL DEFENCE — DISASTER UNIT TO BE FORMED**

At the Council meeting on October 18, 1965, the Euroa Shire Council authorised the formation of a Civil Defence unit for the Shire of Euroa.

A rapidly growing field of volunteers serve many such units which have been established throughout the State and Commonwealth to fully co-ordinate and utilise all available resources in the time of a disaster or emergency.

Euroa Shire is particularly vulnerable to fire and any plan or organisation capable of assisting in this field will be appreciated, particularly with the prompt planned assistance from outside the area.

The Controller, Cr H. Griffiths, has stated that key members have been appointed and will now proceed steadily to form the various sections of the unit. No funds will be solicited from the public, but if you are asked to assist in the unit please do.

Object of report — To lay down the basic organisation for a unit to be named "The Shire of Euroa Civil Defence-Disaster Unit."

Authority — The role of this organisation is one of co-operation, and has no authority, except that vested in it by the Shire Council,

duty of section heads to establish their sections from the outset.

Personnel — No personnel will be appointed to this unit except in special circumstances, if they are already key personnel in any organisation likely to require the assistance of this unit.

Civil Defence Committee — Direct contact by staff officers with organisations will be encouraged, and no actual committee will be formed. Where any meeting is convened the Local Controller will act as chairman.

Control Centre — An efficient, permanent centre is essential. At present a suitable site has not been determined, although several have been considered.

Declaration of Local Disaster — The Victoria Police normally implement the State Disaster Plan, and this procedure will be followed for local disasters. In this manner zone, region and State will be alerted, ensuring rapid support if necessary. The Proper Officer (Shire secretary) may, in conjunction with the Local Controller, or the Local Controller in the absence of co-ordinating police officer, take action. When available the police to be informed of action taken and the situation.

Role of Shire Council — The Council is responsible body which authorised the formation of the unit, to act on behalf of the Shire. Logistic support will be provided by the Council. The Council will act as the official channel for the purpose of obtaining requisitions, reimbursements and other matters as the Council may decide from time to time.

The Shire secretary will facilitate the role of the Council, act as consultant to the Controller on municipal matters, and will not be encumbered with any direct duties within the unit. In this manner full use of his services will be available in time of an emergency.

Stores and Equipment — (a) Expendable stores and fittings NOT provided by Civil Defence HQ or other bodies will be requisitioned on the Council. (a) Stores and equipment available from Civil Defence HQ or other sources will be ordered through the Council. (c) Engineer stores for this unit remain the responsibility of the Shire engineer. All requisitions and accounts will be certified by the

to act as a voluntary unit on its behalf.

Object of organisation — To formulate plans for times of peace or war to:— (a) Co-ordinate various sectional action to assist any authority in an emergency, locally or in adjoining municipalities, in the most efficient manner. (b) Initiate effective action where such authority does not exist. (c) Recruit, train and/or encourage training of personnel at all levels, so that in an emergency their actions may be effective. (d) Encourage preventive measures. (e) Accumulate the necessary stores for effective action. (f). Co-ordinate repair and rehabilitation. (g) Receive refugees and provide assistance as may become necessary under the State Disaster Plan.

The Establishment — By Euroa Shire Council appointment, the local controller will be Cr Harold Griffiths. The establishment decided upon to suit this Shire is shown on Appendix "A". The boundary of the local area is shown on plan marked "One" and coincides with the Shire boundary. It will be the

Local Controller before submission to the Council.

Records — This unit will keep adequate records and encourage arrangements for authorities in the area to arrange for preservation of records in a disaster.

Volunteers — Each section of this unit will give priority to plans for the efficient employment of volunteers.

Cr Griffiths was praised for the excellent way he had organised the unit and his complete, comprehensive report.

Mr N. Northausen is to be thanked for his work in the initial stages towards establishing the unit.

WOOL SALES

VICTORIAN PRODUCERS' CO-OPERATIVE CO. LTD.

Victorian Producers' Co-operative Company Limited, Melbourne, report of sale on October 12, 1965:— We offered out catalogue of 8,604 bales on the second day of the series — Tuesday the 12th. The bulk class portion and some bellies and pieces were sold on the previous day.

Our catalogue drew wool from all parts of the State and the Riverina and border areas of South Australia. A strong, keen enquiry with competition more general and sustained than any previous sale this season was experienced.

Values generally were from 2% to 5 per cent better than at our sale a few weeks ago.

Our top price was 94d. for three bales of sup aaam branded "HP/HILLEND" belonging to the Hillend partnership of Hillend Cavendish. This was a well grown super style wool of excellent handling quality and colour, and of 70/s part 64/s in quality.

Local sales — JJD/BAL (Balmatun) 78d., 74½d., 73d., pcs 68d.; DT/COOEL (Ruffy Wayside) 76d., 63½d., pcs 63½d.; KOS/EUROA (Miepoll South) 72½d., 72d., 71d., pcs 61½d.; GAB/NORTHWOOD (Seymour) 72½d., 69d.; AC/NAG (Nagambie) 72d., 70d., pcs 64½d.; J&LM/A/ERINVALE (Avenel) 70½d., 69d., 68½d., pcs 64½d.; H/DP (Mangalore) 67½d., 67d., 66½d.

Announcement of formation of the Euroa Civil Defence Unit. Euroa Gazette, 27 Oct 1965

²Order of the British Empire

Harold conducted various training exercises and involved service clubs and stock and station agents. Euroa Rotary purchased a van for use by the unit. The unit maintained a list of volunteer District Nurses when the hospital was short staffed and may have faced closure. The unit attended accidents, and conducted searches.

Harold was Controller from 1965–1975 and Liaison Officer with Vic Police until 1989. In 1965 he produced the first Occupation map with phone numbers.

14.0.8 Senior Citizens

In an honorary capacity designed and supervised building of the Club House. Was a member of the original “Back to Euroa” committee which raised funds to enable the rooms to be open free of debt. He was a member and Trustee of the Elderly Citizens Welfare Committee. Health Department asked him to straighten out.

14.0.9 Kindergarten & Infant Welfare Centre

Designed, supervised, (even typed specifications.) Had to keep to a strict price limit, since money had already been spent on an unsuitable design.

14.0.10 Swimming Pool

Based on Harold’s design. Harold fought to have it sited out of flood danger in Bury Street. With Cr. Alexander arranged for purchase of adjacent land for heated indoor pool!

14.0.11 Euroa High School

Harold designed the amenities block and arranged for a grant to build it, at the request of the Public Works Department when insufficient funds were available to carry out their original design.

14.0.12 Other

- Foundation member, Euroa Lions Club, later Secretary. Initiated Lions Park, and designed banner.
- Clearing and filling behind Senior Citizens Club Rooms.
- Helped Agricultural and Pastoral (A&P) Society. Rolling iron on his machine at no cost. Same Church of England.
- Member Euroa RSL. Involved with unit association after 1968.
- Chairman of Euroa Library Committee. Arranged purchase of additional buildings adjacent. One has not yet been taken up but is available.
- Historical Society: Old Farmer’s Arms Hotel [subsequently used as a museum] With Cr Neil Mckernan arranged purchase of and at council request steered the project to commencement.
- Buildings: Includes Euroa Co-op, many houses, Halsall’s shop, Trotman’s garage, country houses.
- Organised bridge replacements (Currie bridge and private bridges), water supplies.
- Initiated Meals on Wheels in Euroa
- Initiated Home Help (against opposition)
- Initiated District Nursing.
- Caravan Park. Seven Creeks initiated.
- Oval: building, fences, drainage. Netball courts.

Appendix D: Kathy's talk at her father's memorial gathering, Dec. 2005

Who was my dad?

To me my dad was the person who piggy backed me to my room every night and dumped me, with well calculated ease onto my bed.

Who would tease me by turning off the light as he went out knowing that I wanted to read.

Or who would mischievously rip off a few blankets from the 10 or so that I piled on top of me in bed. Who would retrieve me during the night when he found me sleep walking around the house or out among the snakes outside.

Later, on returning home from university I might find that he had shortsheeted my bed which I now shared with a brush and a few other assorted bristly objects. As an aside I noticed he got his come uppance when he was in rehab earlier this year – he hated the sheets of the bottom of the bed tucked in. He left an A4 note on the bed to the nurses saying “Please don't tuck in bed”. They left a reply. “Harry – Bed short sheeted as requested – Love the nurses”.

But back to the 50's. He led me through a childhood of magical fantasies which he wove with words and I would sit on his knee and snuggle up inside his coat eating feasts of sumptuous food which he and I miraculously recovered from his inside his bottomless coat pocket. He transported me to another world with tales of our own Billy the wombat and since as a child I was isolated on a farm with little contact with others my age Billy Wombat became my special friend.

At some stage during my childhood I became aware that my dad was the guy who was forever attending meetings in the town to pursue some community goal or other whether as a shire councillor, the founding controller of the Civil Defence (later to become the SES) or some subcommittee or other. Later he would burst into uproarious laughter when I mentioned I had to go to a meeting. In his later years, he expressed concern that he had neglected his family by doing so much community work. But, I wouldn't have had it any other way. That was my dad — doing good, changing things for the better. A perfect role model.

And I never ever felt neglected. I knew that I was as loved as anyone could be, that no matter what I did my dad was there for me if and when I needed him. And if I needed a truly biased opinion about the value of anything I did, he would oblige me by providing it. He died still mistakenly thinking that I would have made a great engineer.

I guess it's customary when talking about someone to list all their achievements. That scares me quite a bit because I know that if I were to do so I would miss out a lot. I was always learning something new about what Dad did – even two days before he died I was still finding out things that he had done. A young nurse in the emergency department at Calvary told him that she had trained at Armidale. Oh, he said, yes, nice place, we designed the hospital at Armidale. So I think I'll just let the hospitals around Australia, the kindergartens, seniors club, aged care complexes, roads, bridges, swimming pool and crematoriums speak for themselves. Of course sadly, a number of buildings that he worked on in Melbourne and elsewhere, including the Canberra Hospital, are no longer with us. But many of his achievements still stand. When my mother was cremated at Faulkner crematorium in Melbourne dad was able to explain to me exactly how her body would be shipped underground to the furnaces — after all, he designed the system.³

I am certain that if he could have done so dad would have raised himself up one last time at the Canberra crematorium to give the owners some tips about how it could be improved. Dad was always thinking up some better way of doing things or some way of doing things that had never been done before. Whether it was the piece of sticky tape on my mother's feeding pump when she had stomach cancer that he added to prevent the tube coming off the machine and his advice to the manufacturers as to how to fix it (which I think they did at his urging in the next model) or the train carriage with its steel undercarriage that he put across our creek because he got sick of the wooden bridges being carried away by trees knocked down in the floods, dad always had a different solution.

He was the first in the district to use steel posts instead of wooden droppers. His conversion of an

³ Author: He told me that at the beginning of WWII it took 12 gallons of very scarce diesel fuel to cremate a body. After his design improvements, no diesel at all was needed.

SEC truck into a fully equipped personal fire truck with powerful waterjets that could be operated from within as well as outside the cabin was inspired and left for dead the official NSW fire fighting equipment of the time.

Dave was recently talking to some CSIRO colleagues who were excited about an innovative new concept they had dreamed up involving power grids. Dave derived great pleasure in informing them that Harold had written a thesis in 1939 proposing just the ideas they were discussing! Interestingly, dad also claimed to have come up with the original concept of shipping containers. Needless to say, dad's innovations were often regarded with great suspicion and even hilarity by more conventional folk. Moreover, his contributions were not always entirely appreciated by the recipient of his advice. However, time has often proved him right.

In the mid-60s well before the landcare movement my father wrote a letter to the local council to have the lane adjacent to our property closed to preserve what he described as the unique natural habitat in the area — an action which at the time was at best considered eccentric and at worst an indicator that he was must certainly be a member of the communist party.⁴ He and my mother also established the Creighton Conservation committee in the mid-70s and in more recent times he and I fenced off a jointly owned block of land on the farm originally reserved for a school to restore it to its natural habitat. Despite this he never trusted outsiders or their motives. He revelled in telling the story of an visiting ornithologist who stood beneath a tree on his farm and spoke authoritatively about a particular very rare bird that might inhabit the area. Apparently dad had no intention of enlightening him that the bird was nesting directly above his head!

Dad's capacity for innovation stood him in good stead after his first brain tumour operation. Left with a marked weakness down one side he had to find alternative means for running the farm. One of his solutions — he adapted a patient lifting machine for use on the back of the ute to lift up sheep and transport them home. In the weeks before he died he was preoccupied with designing a better roller walker — I am sure that he was right and that in years to come manufacturers will produce such devices, sadly too late for him. On the other hand, dad often said that if somebody had already produced something he wasn't interested in thinking about it — he wanted to move onto the next challenge.

He was also a dab hand with the black felt pen. No piece of household equipment, whether his or ours, escaped the attentions of dad's felt tip pen. Even when he was in extreme distress, being ambulated to hospital just before he died, he insisted that I pack his felt tip pen. I forgot the toothpaste but his felt tip pen went off in the ambulance. Dad also had novel uses for the caps of felt tip pens — he once fixed a friend's car which had apparently irretrievably broken down with the aid of only the cap of such a pen.

So, I think that most people would say my dad was different. I have heard the words 'remarkable', 'eccentric', 'special' ... and I'm sure that there were a few that I didn't hear that were no doubt rather less flattering. I know it was a rather remarkable man who could look after my mother at home the way he did in the protracted weeks and months before she died. I suspect that dad is the only person in Australia who has managed to inspire a funeral director to present them with an undertaker's hat at their wife or anybody else's cremation. I imagine there aren't too many people who think of filling in a draft of their own death certificate — or draw up a guide to executors — to save their family (in this case me) the trouble. Most men of dad's age in a certain era were known to give their wives an iron or a saucepan for their birthday — my dad distinguished himself by giving my mum a motorized pump (to join the other 15 he had tucked away on the farm. I am sure it is dad who can take the credit for the fact that my first word was not mum or dad but pump).

Dad had an incorrigible and extremely quick sense of humour. One woman mistakenly arrived on his doorstep not so long ago said "Oh dear, I think I've come to the wrong place". Dad's typically quick as a flash reply was "Oh no, you're at the right place... just 50 years too late". Despite that comment, I think though that one thing that stands out to me about my dad is that I don't think he had a misogynistic bone in his body. Oh, yes, he would chat women up with a twinkle in his eye. But, the thing that distinguished him from most of his peers was that he really liked women as people.

⁴Kathy has since discovered that it was her mother who wrote the letter to the council. She also has a letter from the council, approving the request.

In fact dad was man who cared about other people. He never stopped trying to reach out and help others. Whether it was the wives of quote 'his men' unquote, meaning the widows of people under his command in the army, or young people who didn't have the best start in life he reached out and tried to help.

He said that he found it very difficult to cope when it was he that needed help. But actually, caring for my dad was for me a privilege. No matter how often he said "Thankyou for everything", and he said it often, it was as though he was saying it for the first time. And his smile when he said it was worth a million dollars.

So, I don't know what my dad is doing now but if I had a wish for him it would NOT be that he, or anybody else in his vicinity, should rest in peace. On the contrary, I hope he is at the pearly gates telling them how they could modify them so they work better, I hope he is adjusting the angels wings for better aeronautical advantage and by golly gosh, I hope that they have felt tip pens up there.

Index of People

- Abbott, Tony, 37, 137
 Ahrens, Jenny, 140
 Ali, Kathina, 129, 142–144
- Bammer, Gabriele, 193
 Banfield, Michelle, 129, 131, 144
 Bannister, Catherine, 52
 Barney, Linda, 144
 Barr, Andrew, 137
 Battye, Greg, 88, 109
 Bauer, Stephanie, 142
 Beattie, Lieut. Adrian, 62
 Bennett, Anthony, 9, 10, 131, 135, 136, 141, 151
 Bennett, Kylie, 9, 125, 129, 135, 136, 141, 144, 194
 Berge, Lorna, 59, 60
 Berge, Odd, 59
 Berriman, David, 10, 131
 Best, Debbie, 92
 Birmingham, Irene, 94
 Bishop, Lara, 144
 Blainey, Geoffrey, 94
 Bond, Pam, 35
 Boreham, Judy, 82, 86
 Boyer, Celia, 122
 Boyer, Pam, 138
 Brack, Vicky, 85
 Brain, Dick, 61
 Brinkman, Judy, 92
 Britcliffe, Kylie
 see Bennett, Kylie, 2
 Brumby, John, 139
 Burke, Alice, *see* Threlfall, Alice
 Burke, Thomas, 52
 Burton, Ann, 84
 Butler, Mark, 137
 Byrne, Mrs, 84, 86
- Calear, Alison, 144
 Cardew-Hall, Mick, 136
 Carlson, Corrie, 34, 40
 Carlson, John, 42
 Carlson, Mary, 42
 Carnell, Kate, 137
 Carron-Arthur, Brad, 131, 144
 Unsupported run to Cape York, 144
 World's Toughest Mudder, 144
 Cassie, the dog, 37
 Cataldo, Giuseppe, 104
 Cheetham, Brian, 83
 Chen, May-Jane, 93
 Christensen, Helen, 9–11, 13, 123–125, 135, 137, 141, 143
 Departure from ANU, 150
 Clark, Manning, 90
 Conder, Mrs, 42
- Condonis, Margaret, 193
 Cook, Michael, 87, 88, 91, 92
 Cook, Ronnie, 92
 Cooke, Linda, 87
 Coonan, Helen, 137, 138
 Cooper, Marita, 144
 Courtenay, Christine, 3
 Crocos, Lorraine, *see* Short, Lorraine
 Crocos, Lorraine, 1966 school photo, 28
 Cuijpers, Pim, 143
 Cunningham, John, 136, 193
 CMHR Deputy Director, 135
 Currie, Ian Rollo, 67
- d'Alpuget, Blanche, 3
 Dann, William, 52
 Danta, Gytis, 94, 96
 Don, the sheep dog, 37
 Donker, Tara, 143
 Dravnieks, John, 84
 Drew, Les, 99
 Duncan-Jones, Paul, 124
- Eisemann, Martin, 141, 142
 Evans, Gareth, 139
- Farrer, Lou, 129, 143, 144
 Fassnacht, Dan, 143
 Fels, Allan, 139
 Ferguson, Lois, 35
 Field, Jeff, 91
 Floyd, Margaret, *see* Hawking, Margaret
 Foster, Joan, 72
- Gallagher, Katy, 137
 Gamble, Gene, 27
 Garnaut, Ross, 139
 Gee, Brendan, 144
 Gillard, Julia, 37, 38
 Gladstones, Bill, 93
 Gleeson, Prue, 138
 GMa, 30
 Gordon, Sue, 88
 Gray, Sir Muir, 136
 Gribbin, Mr, 29
 Grieve, James, 92
 Griffiths, Alfred, 70, 73
 Remarkable brick laying, 73
 Griffiths, Andrew, 20, 70
 Griffiths, Harold, 15, 20, 21, 23–25, 35, 58, 62, 63, 82, 90, 100
 Air encephalography, 34
 Bushfires, 64
 Creighton 'policeman', 62
 Designing hospitals, 58

- Driving instructor, 36
- Establishing moral authority, 63
- Firetruck, 66
- Harmonica, 26
- Helicopter ride with Wendy, 69
- Life-threatening illnesses, 68
- Meningioma, 35
- Military service, 61
- Motorbike, 58, 59
- Ocean Grove, 58
- Possible PTSD?, 62
- Public Works, 59
- Road design and safety, 62
- Sayings, 69
- SES, 64
- Shire councillor, 67
- Short sheeting, 26
- Southern Aurora disaster, 67
- Steaks on stove, 23
- Surfing, 61
- Won't power, 63
- Griffiths, Ivan, 59
- Griffiths, Jack, 73
- Griffiths, John, 16, 20, 34
- Griffiths, Kathy
 - 21st birthday, 86
 - Central Australian holiday, 88
 - Convalescent Home East Finchley, 92
 - Foundation for Mental Health Research, 124
 - Administering alcohol, 93
 - Ansett ANA Junior Flying Club, 31
 - Anti-bullying projects, 89
 - ANU Professor Emeritus, 154
 - ANU Research Integrity Advisor, 132
 - Australian Postgraduate Award, 91
 - Aviation safety contribution, 131
 - Bogged bus, 118
 - Book on head injury, 99
 - Canberra Centenary Trail, 157
 - Central Australian holiday, 100, 119
 - CFA trophy, 34
 - CFS, 89, 91, 96
 - Christmas card making, 117
 - Circular airfares, 118
 - Clinical Neuropsychologist, 94
 - Clinical practice guidelines, NHMRC, 98
 - Clozapine study, 99
 - CMHR, 124
 - Business development manager, 124
 - Director, 134
 - Research coordinator, 124
 - Volunteering, 99
 - Constructional apraxia, 91
 - Consumer Research Unit Director, 129
 - Craft work, 111
 - Decorating terracotta pots, 111
 - Depression, 84
 - Dressmaking, 113
 - Duodenal ulcer, 26
 - Dux, 30
 - Editorial assistant, 93
 - Einstein poster, 34
 - Essay writing, 31
 - FairIsle jumper, 117
 - Farm work, 25
 - Feminism, 33
 - First academic paper, 91
 - Glacier walking, 183
 - Glandular fever, 91
 - Head injury in boxers, 98
 - Heater, 88, 90
 - Hip bump, ferocious, 82
 - International collaborations, 141
 - Kidnapping, Chiang Mai, 122
 - Knitting, 114
 - Lava tube at midnight, 174
 - Learning to drive, 36
 - Love of dogs, 37
 - Mallorca, love of, 123
 - Mataranka thermal springs, 119
 - Merimbula talk, 140
 - Michelin dining in Iliminaq, 183
 - MoodGYM grant application, 124
 - Mosaics, 116
 - Netball, 34
 - Ningaloo Reef holiday, 89
 - PhD supervision, 8, 144
 - PhD thesis, 93
 - Piano, 111
 - Pilbara holiday, 89
 - Pregnancy, 96
 - Private neuropsychology practice, 97
 - Psych testing of murderer, 94
 - Psych. Research & Information Service, 98
 - Public speaking, 33
 - Remote working at Creighton, 145
 - Rural mental health, 140
 - Scalding, 23
 - Singing voice, 26
 - South Cornwall Coast Path, 159
 - Study trip to London, 121
 - Study visit to UK, 92
 - Tapestry, 115
 - Tasmania holiday 1974, 118
 - Tongariro crossing, 155
 - Toxoplasmosis, 91
 - Training for Bureau of Meteorology, 139
 - Tutoring at ANU, 88
 - Uncooperative RCH administration, 94
 - Vanoise National Park, 121
 - Visit to CUHK, Hong Kong, 93
 - Visit to Manila, 105
 - Wainwright's Coast to Coast, 168
 - Walking and other adventures, 155
 - West Highland Way, 163
 - Work travel, 122
- Griffiths, Kathy, 1966 school photo, 28
- Griffiths, Les, 67, 70
- Griffiths, Lorna, *see* Berge, Lorna
- Griffiths, Pat, 15, 20, 22–24, 40, 42, 47, 56, 82
 - Breast cancer, 34
 - Cooking, 23
 - Cottage garden, 48
 - Grammatical exactitude, 26
 - Knowledge of British history, 43
 - Sense of humour, 44
- Griffiths, Pat, 1934 school photo, 27
- Griffiths, Pat, feeding alpaccas, 46
- Griffiths, Ruth, 34, 70, 73
 - Bushfire hero, 73
 - Cinema organist, 75
- Griffiths, Talbot, 73

- Griffiths-Hawking, Erika, 37, 105, 108, 194
 Citizenship, 108
 Painting, 110
 Wedding, 109
- Griffiths-Hawking, Jack, 37, 61, 66, 88, 96, 100, 101
 Algebra, 102
 AME school, 103
 Anaphylactic reaction to bee sting, 107
 Asian friends, 104
 At Uluru, 101
 Basketball, 106
 Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, 106
 Building a computer, 102
 Computer games, 106
 Cook primary school, 103
 DJ, 105
 Electric skateboard, 107
 Employment at Funnelback, 108
 Friend Pat, 106
 Friend Rohit, 106
 Gentle giant, 101
 high school, 103
 Illness at high school, 107
 Magic cards, 106
 Misdiagnosed giardia, 96
 MoodGYM launch, 133
 Netball, 106
 Philippines, 105
 Syllogisms, 102
 Thursday nights, 105
 Turner Primary, 102
 Ultimate frisbee, 106
 Veganism, 107
 Visa problems, 105
 Wedding, 109
 Yong ki-do, 106
- Groom, Grace, 139
- Gulliver, Amelia, 129, 144
- Halsall, Chris, 19
- Halsall, Reg, 62
- Halton, Jane, 139
- Hamblin, Arthur, 60, 73, 76
- Hamblin, Henry, 76
- Hamblin, Joseph, 78, 79
 Piano in Kyneton Museum, 81
 Piano maker, 76
- Hamblin, Ruth, *see* Griffiths, Ruth
- Hamer, Rupert, 67
- Hammond, Eliza, 56
- Harding, Steve, 83
- Harris, Catherine Mary, 73, 77
- Harris, James, 77
- Hawking, Dorn, 84
- Hawking, Margaret, 42
- Healy, Ben, 144
- Henderson, Scott, 12, 13, 124, 134
- Henry, Ken, 139
- Herbst, Peter, 92
- Hickie, Ian, 139, 194
- Hill, Ashley, 83
- Hill, Carolyn, 83
- Hill, Dr Val, 69, 70
- Hill, Robert, 83
- Hirsch, Jorge, 8
- Hort, Linda, 91
- Hunter, Margaret, *see* Hawking, Margaret
- Huppert, Felicia, 92
- Huppert, Herbert, 92
- Hurley, Fiona, 151
- Hurley, Fiona, CMHR Business Manager, 134
- Hynds, Del, 30
- Jackson, James, 52
- Jackson, Jane, 52
- Jones, Bethany, 144
- Jorm, Tony, 124, 129, 133, 150
- Kelly, Claire, 131
- Kennett, Jeff, 139
- Kerr, Ann, 77
- Kimo, 143
- Kok, Robin, 143
- Kyrios, Mike, 136, 191
- Lazenby, George, 79
- Lee, Jim, 83, 189
- Lennon, Cynthia, 3
- Lintvedt, Ove, 141, 144
- Lister, Gordon, 82, 83, 86, 92, 121
 Bagpipe playing, 84
- Lister, Pam, 83, 84, 86, 121
- Lodge, Sue, 88
- Mackinnon, Andrew, 145
- Mahony, Moir, 86
- Mathew, Anne, 94
- Mathieson, Tim, 37
- McGinness, Paul, 136
- McGorry, Pat, 139, 191
- McGrath, John, 194
- McGregor, Peter, 110, 173
- McGregor, Sam, 89, 107, 109
 MoodGYM launch, 133
- McGregor, Siew-Gim, 109, 173
- McNair, Bernard, 194
- Mendoza, John, 139
- Mills, Don, 27
- Moore, Helen, 92
- Moore, Michael, 137
- Moore, Michael, ACT government minister, 11
- Mrs Ha-Ha, 119
- Mulvaney, Claire, 84
- Mulvaney, John, 82
- Nelms, Fiona, 136
- Nelms, Fiona, ANU Director of Innovation, 136
- Newcombe, Ray, 91–93
- Newey, Marie, 88
- Nod, the sheep dog, 37
- O’Neil, Dawn, 139
- Oxley, Warren, 61, 68
- Ozols, Ingrid, 194
- Papageorge, Miss, 31
- Patterson, Kay, 137
- Patterson, Kay (Federal Health Minister, 133
- Piercy, Malcolm, 92, 93
- Pippa, the cavoodle, 37, 39
- Poulis, Maria, 83, 86
- Powell, John, 143
- Price, Huw, 92

- Pyne, Christopher, 137
- Quinlan, Frank, 139
- Rawlinson, Andy, 159, 168
- Rawlinson, Miranda, 118, 159, 168
- Redman, Steve, 88
- Refshauge, Richard, 90
- Reid, Margaret, 125
- Reid, Margaret, ACT Senator, 125
- Reid, Robyn, 29, 35
- Rein, Thérèse, 138
- Reynolds, Julia, 131, 193
- Rickard, Pam, *see* Lister, Pam
- Riedel-Heller, Steffi, 142
- Rigden, Sally, 83, 189
- Riordan, Shane, 106
- Riper, Heleen, 143
- Ritterband, Lee, 143
- Robb, Andrew, 137
- Robertson, Stephen, 168
- Rose, Mrs, 26, 28
- Rose, the papillon, 37
- Rosenberg, Stephen, 129, 130
- Ross, James, 131
- Ruttledge, Sgt. Jack, 62
- Saxon, John George, 16
- Seagrim, Elspeth, 90
- Seagrim, Gavin, 90
- Jean Piaget, 90
- Seddon, Dave, 84
- Shelton, Mr, 31
- Sherrin, Isobel, 36
- Sherrin, Tom, 36
- Short, Ian, 35
- Short, Lorraine, 31, 35, 36
- Skinner, Graeme, 80
- Slee, Judy, 88, 92
- Sta. Maria, Erika, *see* Griffiths-Hawking, Erika
- Street, Janet Euphemia, 73
- Street, Peter, 73
- Sullivan, Ellen, 70
- Taylor, Georgia, 11, 88, 89, 95, 109, 123, 140
- At Uluru, 101
- Brother Rod, 89
- Sister Nissie, 89
- Sister-in-law Kath, 89
- Thierry, Jean-Pierre, 91
- Thierry, Nicole, 91
- Threlfall, Alice, 23, 41, 52–54
- Horse racing, 52
- Needlecraft, 52
- Threlfall, Charles, 56
- Threlfall, Cornelius (Neil), 56
- Threlfall, Corrie, *see* Carlson, Corrie
- Threlfall, George, 55, 56
- Orchards, vineyards, 56
- Threlfall, Jack, 20, 34, 41, 52, 55
- Threlfall, Pat, *see* Griffiths, Pat
- Threlfall, Robert, 56
- Threlfall, Tom, 56
- Threlfall, William, 56
- Titch, the chihuahua, 37, 52
- Tonzing, Graeme, 86
- Tonzing, Jennie, 86
- Tonzing, Sarah, 86
- Trevaskis, Noel, 140
- Trewern, Joan, 82
- Wahl, Hans-Werner, 142
- Walsh, Kevin, 93, 94
- Wardley, Deborah, 31
- Warmington, Bobbie, 36
- Warmington, Stuart, 36
- Waterloo, Knut, 141
- Wendy and Vic, 69
- Westcombe, Alex, 101
- Westcome, Sue, 101
- White, Pat, 92
- Wilkie, Andrew, 137
- Woodward, Alan, 139
- Wright, Penny, 137
- Wyke, Maria, 92, 93
- Zangwill, Oliver, 92

General Index

- 13 MacDonnell St, Yarralumla, 84
- 24 Hovea St, O'Connor, 86
- 54 Gardiner St, Downer, 90
- 85 Illawarra Road, Hawthorn, 36, 58, 72
- ACACIA, 129
- ACT Government, 8, 10
- AFFIRM, 126
- Agree with me now, 35
- Alice Springs, 88, 100, 118
- Alley cat, piano music, 111
- Alternator, 32V, 21
- Amazon Web Services (AWS), 136
- AOK, German health insurance company, 142
- Arctic University of Norway, 142
- Art for Answers, 126
- Assumption College, 34
- Atomic weapon test, Maralinga, 72
- Australian Department of Health and Aged Care (DHAC), 8
- Australian Foundation for Mental Health Research, 124
- Australian Journal of Early Childhood, 93
- Australian Leadership Forum, 139
- Australian National University (ANU), 82
- Australian Psychological Association, 99
- Australian Research Council (ARC), 8
- Balmain markets, 88
- Basslink, 58
- Battye Delusions, 88
- Beazley, Kim, 102
- Bernina sewing machine, 52
- Beyond Blue
 - Funding for CRU, 129
- Biographical register of Australian colonial musical personnel, 80
- Black Dog Institute, 135
- Blue Board, 9, 11
- Blue Boffins, 194
- Blue Lagoon, 174
- BlueBoard, 131
- BluePages, 133, 140
- BluePages web site, 9
- Booroomba Rocks, 82
- Borve, Outer Hebrides, 78
- Breast cancer, 42
- Bridge, railway carriage, 63
- Brindabella, 91
- Broadford State School, 41
- BrolgaNet, 9, 194
- Broome, 120
- Bus Depot markets, 88
- Bushfire, Foster 1906, 75
- Cable, Melbourne-Sydney, 63
- Canberra Private Practice Fund, 92, 99
- Carbon offsets, 155
- Cathedral Hotel, Melbourne, 42
- Christmas in Euroa, 84
- Chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS), 8
- Churchill, Manitoba, 189
- Civil Defence, Euroa, 64
- CMHR
 - 40th anniversary, 13
- CMHR awards, 153
- CMHR Review, 136
- Condon, Mrs, 41
- Conscientious objection, 31
- Consumer Research Unit (CRU), 129
- Consumer-led mental health research, 9
- Coober Pedy, 100
- Cooking for shearers, 23
- Copper, laundry, 22
- Coral Bay, 89
- Coricia, 41
- Corner Inlet, Vic, 73
- Cottage Creche Committee, 87
- Country Fire Authority, Euroa, 64
- Country Roads Board, 62
- Country Women's Association, Euroa, 52
- Crawford Institute of Public Policy, ANU, 139
- Crawford Prize, 86
- Creighton, 15, 89
- Creighton CFA sub-base, 47
- Creighton II, 89, 145
- Creighton State School, 26, 41
- Creighton, district in Vic., 16
- Creighton, keeping cool, 24
- Creighton, name of property, 16
- Creightons Creek, 63
- Creightons Creek in flood, 64
- Department of Health and Aged Care (DHAC), 9, 10, 131
- Depression, effect on cognitive ability, 124
- Deua valley, 92
- DHAC, 131
- Dial-a-Safari, 119
- Dieldrin, 20
- Dunny, outdoor, 21
- E-couch, 9, 11
- e-Couch, 89, 140, 143
- E-hub Health, 9
- e-hub Health, 9
 - Acquisition by Dialogue, 137
 - Formation, 136
- Ecclestone, Lancashire, 56, 57
- Ellalea, 23, 34, 56
- Emu nuclear test site, 70

- Euroa Agricultural Show, 31
- Explosion, gas, 24
- Falcon ute, 97
- Farm financial situation, 23
- Faroe Islands, 177
- Ford Laser, 100
 - \$10 exhaust system repair, 101
- Foster, Vic, 73
- Foy & Gibson, 73
- Franklin River, Vic, 73
- Free University, Amsterdam, 143
- Garran Hall, ANU, 82
- Gas pipeline, Melbourne-Sydney, 33
- Gippsland Fires, 74
- Glandular fever, 8
- GMV-6 TV station, 31
- Gourmet in the Gardens, 126
- Granny flat, planning circus, 68
- Greenland, Ilulissat, 179
- Griffiths, Kathy
 - Penmanship, 31
- h-index, 8
- Hamblin's piano factory, Kyneton Vic, 80
- Hare, electric, 23
- Honour board, Euroa Secondary College, 30
- Horgabost, Outer Hebrides, 77
- House cow, 25
- House, Creighton, 20
- Hume Freeway, 62, 63
- Hurtigruten, 122
- Ice chest, 23
- Ice cream cake, 86
- Iceland, 179
- Imperial College, London, 92
- Indian High Commission, 86
- Influenza pandemic, 1919, 55
- Inglewood, Victoria, 56
- Inspector Morse, 155
- Isle of Arran, Goatfell, 175
- Jökulsárlón, 175
- Joan Baez concert, 83
- John Broadwood & Sons, 79
- Kalbarri, 89
- Karajini National Park, 89
- Kata Tjuta, 89
- Kings Canyon, 89, 118
- Koolpin gorge, 119
- Kununurra, 119
- Lawyers market, Manila, 105
- Leighton Irwin, Architects and Engineers, 58
- Leipzig University, 141
- LifeLine online forums, 194
- Longwood fire, 1965, 64
- Luskentyre, Outer Hebrides, 77
- MacPhillamy, Cummins and Gibson, 90
- Maralinga nuclear test site, 70
- Mataranka, 119
- Medal, for mental health research, 134
- Melbourne Teachers College, 41
- Mental Health Council of Australia, 130
- Mental Health First Aid, 12, 140
- Mental Health Guru, 9, 11
- Mental Illness Education, ACT (MIEACT), 138
- Mike Walsh Show, 52
- Monitor lizards, 89
- Monkey Mia, 89
- MoodGYM, 9, 10, 13, 89, 131, 136
 - Chinese, 10
 - Dutch, 10
 - German, 10
 - German language version, 142
 - NHS randomised control trials, 143
 - Norwegian, 10
 - Spanish, 10
- MulgaNet, 9
- National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health (NCEPH), 137
- National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), 8, 10
- National Institute for Mental Health Research (NIMHR), 137
- National Neurological Diseases Hospital, 92
- Netball, 82
- Netball underwear, 82
- Newbury, Berkshire, 78
- Ningaloo Reef, 89
- Northeast Health, 140
- Nyngan on the Bogan, 100
- Ocean Grove, 60, 61
- Oodnadatta Track, 100
- Ormiston Gorge, 89
- Paraburdoo, 89
- Peter McCallum Institute, 34
- Possums, 20
- Public Works Department, Victoria, 59
- Pumps, 21
- Railway, Melbourne-Sydney, 63
- Reckitt's Blue, 22
- Refrigerator, kerosene, 23
- Register of depression sufferers, 134
- Rey Complex Figures Test, 88
- Reykjavik, 174
- RMIT, 58
- Robbery, major in Turner, 98
- Rodents, 20
- Roses Cafe, 26, 28
- Rotary, 8
- Royal Canberra Hospital implosion, 58
- Rural mental health, 9
- School bus, 26
- Shetland, 185
- Shinkansen, 86
- Shower, very luxurious, 20
- Snakes, 20, 24
- Social Psychiatry Research Unit (SPRU), 12
- Southern Aurora disaster, 67
- Staffa, 189
- State Emergency Service, Euroa, 64
- Stigma, mental health, 9
- Strathbogie fire, 1990, 66
- Stump, Wonga Vic, 74

Table, collapsing, 24
Taransay, Island in Outer Hebrides, 77
Tasman Limited, train, 118
Tasmania, 52
Taylors College, 31
Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto #1, 111
Telephone, party line, 22
Termites, 20
The Agony and the Ecstasy, 36
Timor, Dutch West, 61
Tintern Grammar School, 26, 41, 89
Tomato juice, 23
Toora, Vic, 73
Tornado, Creighton 1967, 67
Toxoplasmosis, 8
Tractor, McCormick International B-250, 16
Transition to Recovery Program (TRec), 138
Tromsø, 122, 141
Turner, 97
Turquoise Bay, 89

Uluru, 89, 118

University of Heidelberg, 142
University of Virginia, 143

Valley of the Winds, 89
Villers-Bretonneux, 55

Wallara Ranch, 119
Water bag, canvas, 23
Wedding on Springbank Island, 83
Western Plains Zoo, Dubbo, 100
What Works and What Doesn't, 9, 13
Whiteford, Harvey, 141
Wilcannia, 100, 101
William Creek, 100
Windmill, 21
Wonga, Vic, 73
Wood stove, 23
Woomera rocket range, 70
World War II, 59, 61
Wringer, clothes, 22

Þingvellir, 174

Over a period of around 15 years from 2001, Kathy Griffiths and her colleagues at ANU's Centre for Mental Health Research (CMHR) operated in a rare sweet spot for academic research. Winning tens of millions of dollars in funding, they were carrying out innovative, impactful, and influential research into e-mental health, collaborating with prestigious institutions across the globe, and delivering benefit to hundreds of thousands of sufferers of mental ill-health around the globe. CMHR's online interventions such as MoodGym, eCouch, and MHGuru have attracted users from over 190 countries and been translated into many different languages. Along the way CMHR influenced public policy on suicide and anti-depressants. During most of the period Kathy Griffiths was Director or Deputy Director of CMHR. Kathy's remarkable research record has been achieved despite suffering chronic illness, including CFS and depression, for much of her working life.

This is the life story of a kind and caring, honest and honorable person, who always does the right thing and stands up for her family, friends and team members. A highly focused, extremely determined person, able to work more than a hundred hours a week and to continue pursuing important goals when other mortals dropped by the wayside.

Her life has not been endless grinding work. Many who have contributed to this book make mention of her kindness, her sense of humour, and the sound of her laughter. No matter how busy she was, she always found time to care for a friend or colleague in trouble. A wonderful mother who is very proud of her son Jack.

In retirement she has travelled widely, and completed several long distance walks. Throughout her life she has amused herself with music, needlecraft, mosaics, tapestries and knitting, inheriting the creativeness of her mother and maternal grandmother. Growing up on a sheep farm in Victoria, she followed other teens in putting up a poster in her bedroom, but the subject was Albert Einstein rather than the Fab Four.

Searching for origins of her character among her parents and ancestors, I found creativity, initiative, integrity, determination and achievement. But I also found remarkable stories of forebears heroically escaping bushfires, fighting in the Battle of the Somme, building pianos and furniture for Queen Victoria, constructing rocket ranges and atomic test sites, being cleared from the island of Taransay, being transported to Van Diemens Land, running a brothel in the gold-fields, and registering as Victoria's first female jockey.