

SOUTH PACIFIC

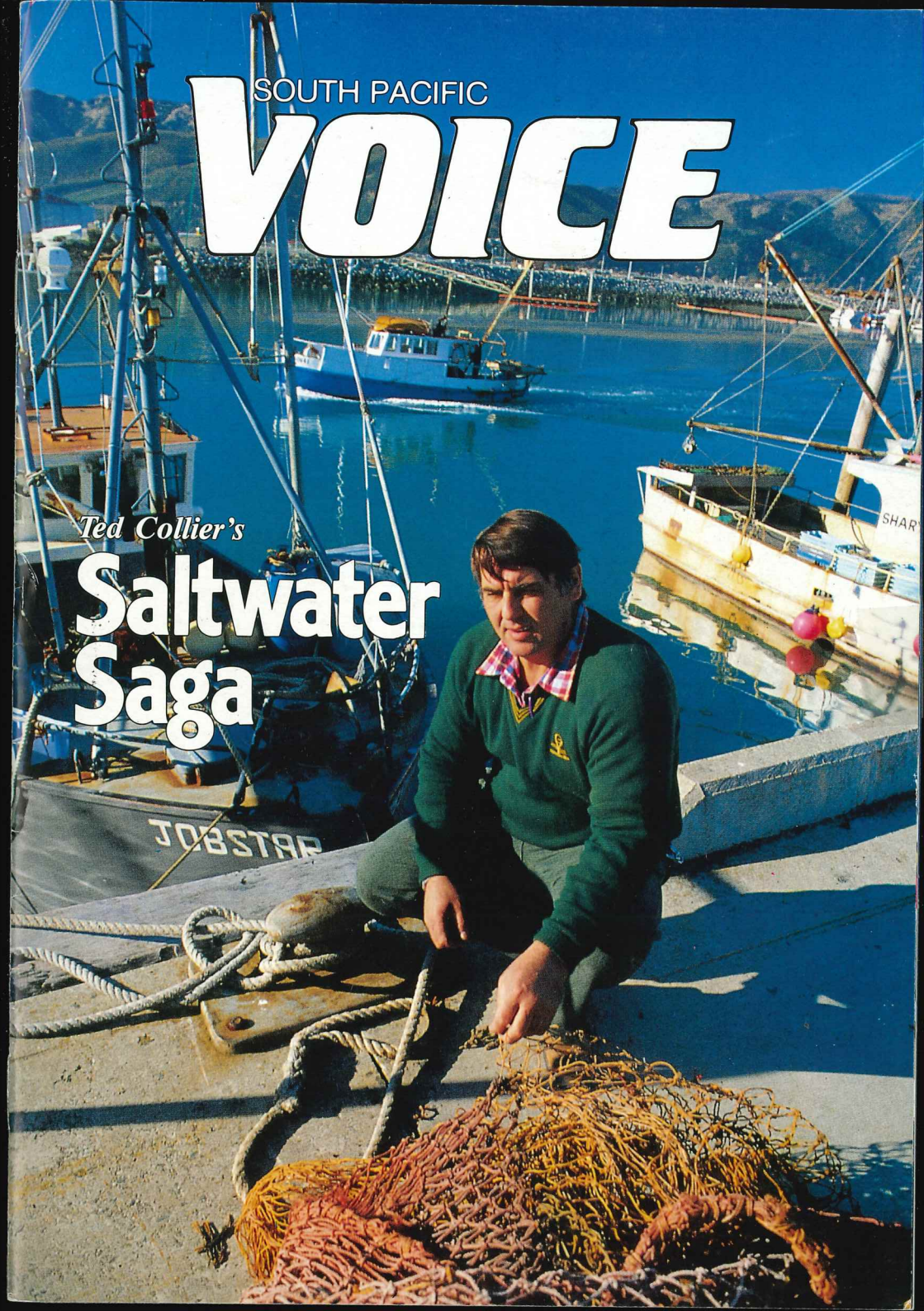
VOICE

Ted Collier's

Saltwater Saga

JOBSTAR

SHAR





Ted Collier's

Saltwater Saga

Ted Collier
Richmond, NZ

Crack! The cane came down across the seat of my pants, and what with the angle of my torso and the tightness of the trouser material across my rear end, it hurt.

Swish ... Crack! Again and again, until something inside me broke. I'd had a gutsful.

I turned on the master who was wielding the instrument of punishment and wrestled it out of his hands. I was bigger than he was so he didn't have much chance. I grabbed it in two hands and gave that Marist Brother the hiding of his life.

It felt so good to me because I was sick and tired of being on the receiving end. It felt good to be the one dishing it out for a change, even if it was only ever so briefly.

I'd been on the receiving end right from when I was a kid. I was the youngest, which didn't help matters at all. I had four brothers and three sisters and they used to spoil me rotten at times — made me think the world owed me.

Only at times mind you. Other times I spent staying out of my father's way. He was a boozier and when he was tanked he wasn't safe to be around. He got into my mum a bit too and gave her a hard time. I don't know how she took it.

She was a Catholic, my mum. Made us all tag along to church with her every Sunday. It was a waste of time, I reckon, but there was no getting out of it. We went right from when we were toddlers until we left school.

School was one place I was breaking my neck to get out of. I hated it — right from primary. I was left handed, but back then the system said you weren't allowed to be. No reason, just weren't.

So every time the teacher caught me writing with my left hand, whack! Down across my knuckles came his ruler. I remember that more than anything else about school. And I resented being treated like I was some

freak.

You can imagine what my knuckles looked like at the end of a day. The more they tried to change me, the more I determined to stay the same as I was. I reckon it was that treatment that brought out the rebel in me.

Marked man

My dislike of school was sealed, and I made sure everyone knew how I felt. Trouble is, though, that made me a marked man and if anything happened around the place, guess who was blamed.

When I got to high school the same pattern persisted and I was regularly touching my toes, hearing the swish of the bamboo through the air and feeling the painful burning as it bit through my trousers.

But it bit once too often. I didn't see why I should be blamed all the time.

That's when I tried the cane out myself. Didn't do a bad job of it either, I thought.

Of course, the authorities took a different view and instead of showing a little more respect, they came down on me even harder.

Shortly after that episode I was shown the gate — again for something I didn't do.

Was I glad to get out of those school gates! And once outside I declared that I was never going to have anything to do with the Catholic religion again. I gave it all up as a bad job.

Now that I was free I had to figure out what to do to keep myself alive. I tried a couple of apprenticeships but didn't stick them for too long. The pay was lousy and wasn't nearly enough to support my new-found lifestyle of booze and birds. So I eventually ended up working for my two brothers who had a building and engineering firm.

I learned a few skills there like welding and woodworking and stayed

on for four or five years. Got to build myself a boat as well. One of my brothers was keen on the water and built himself a plywood trimaran. I followed suit and built a 22 foot steel launch.

I got to love fishing and boats and the sea while working with my brothers and when I finally finished with them (we got sick of each other's company) I took my boat and went crayfishing out of Lyttleton.

It was great. I loved the life — fishing and drinking, and drinking and fishing. I got married too.

Tough life

Fishing was a tough life, especially for the lady at home. So I eventually sold the boat and we ended up at Little Akaroa where I landed a job managing a motor garage. I still loved boats and potted about in my spare time with them.

While working at the garage a bloke came along and asked me to build him a fishing boat — a 32 footer. Some boat, I thought. I took up the challenge and when I had finished it he took it off to the Chatham Islands to fish.

I envied him, I can tell you. It made me unsettled, thinking about the life on the ocean waves — you only remember the good points when you're safe on land!

Probably the half boozed state in which I lived my life from day to day clouded my ability to think clearly and realistically most of the time.

Business at the garage was on a slide. There wasn't enough work coming in to keep it going and in the end I left it. And my wife and little son too.

We didn't separate or anything like that. It was just that we were in dire straits financially and needed some money. I figured the place to make a quick buck was fishing in the Chathams. So that's where I went.

Life in the Chathams was no picture

postcard existence. Sure, on fine, sunny days (which were few and far between) it was a beautiful place. But for the rest of the time it was raining or blowing and all there was to do was drink. I didn't object to that, mind you, but it sure got lonely being cooped up in the cabin of a boat all the time.

It was just luck or something that I didn't meet my end while in the Chathams too.

I had a bit of an argument with the skipper of the boat I was on. I wasn't one for sticking around when someone was laying down the law, so I quit. Left, and got a job on another boat.

A short time later that skipper drowned when his boat sank. That rocked me — the thought that I could have been with him when the boat went down. Not only that, but he owed me a good deal of money from wages and so forth, and since there was nothing written down I was left high and dry.

The stack of cash I'd come over to make was nonexistent and I was probably worse off than if I'd stayed back in Christchurch.

Down and out

There's nothing worse than being down and out in a desolate place like the Chats so I packed it in and headed back to the mainland. Nelson was my destination. I was stony broke but I got my wife and son up from Christchurch and we started over again.

Salt water was in my blood and I took a job on the James Cook, a fisheries research vessel, as a deck hand. That was eighteen months of boozing and being away from home.

I liked it on the boat but the time sure did nothing to help the family situation. So I came ashore and took a job with an engineering firm.

For six years I put to good use the skills I'd learned when I started out

with my brothers. I enjoyed the job and it gave me plenty of resources to get another project under way: I used my spare time over those years to build a 40-foot fishing trawler and once it was completed it kept me employed for the next seven years plying the waters between Nelson and Greymouth, fishing.

Still on the booze; still away from home a lot. Even when I was on the land at the engineering job I didn't have time for my family, and by this time we hardly knew each other. We eventually split up: me to my booze and fishing, my wife and son to fend for themselves as best they could.

Now I might not have spent too much time being concerned for them while I had them, but I can tell you it sure left one hell of a lonely gap in my life once they had gone.

It was crazy. Seemed that I was never going to get it together, never going to make it. I carried on fishing, throwing myself into it with all my might in an effort to block out the

loneliness. The booze helped too. I drank more and more of the stuff. I reckon I was an alcoholic but I didn't care. It seemed to me that life had messed up and there was just nothing in it any more.

I got married again; out of loneliness. Probably not a good reason but I did it anyway. I sold the boat and settled into a fish 'n' chip shop in town, thinking that might stop my second marriage going the way of the first.

But it didn't. It ended in divorce and I was left with three fish 'n' chip shops (I'd got into partnership in a couple of other shops in town). The same old story though — the shops got into financial strife and eventually collapsed.

Time to start again.

This starting again was getting to be a familiar story, I can tell you. About the only good thing to come out of the latest sob story was a lady I'd met — Louise.

After my divorce and the loss of the

The Lady Waiana, built and operated by Ted Collier.



shops I went filleting fish for a while and then landed a job at the electricity department.

By this time Louise and I were living together. Life for us was one big party. We had no responsibilities and it seemed to me that maybe for once things were going to be OK.

I was still knocking back booze but it seemed I had reached the bottom and was beginning to climb up again. It was about time. I wondered if my mother's praying had anything to do with it. I didn't wonder too hard mind you ...

Crazy

Just when I thought everything was coming together nicely, it happened. Louise was at home doing the washing when out of the blue she had a vision, or a voice, or something. She heard God speaking to her. He told her that she was dearly loved.

Whatever it was, it awakened something in her because she went looking for a church to attend and within two weeks had become a born-again Christian.

I thought she had gone completely crazy — and hoped it wasn't catching!

Then Louise tried to convert me, and to top it all off she wouldn't sleep with me because we weren't married. I reckoned she was due for the nut house so I moved out and left her to it.

But there was an attraction there that drew me back. I couldn't stay away and Louise eventually talked me into going to hear a travelling evangelist in town.

At the end of that meeting this guy asked for those that wanted to get right with God to come up the front.

Well, I wasn't exactly an angel, but I still blamed God and his religion for making a mess of my life, and I wasn't going to go out the front and ask him to patch it all up for me. No way. But I forgot to tell my legs. They just wouldn't stand still and before I could get control of them, they just walked me right out the front and handed me

over to God!

Reading most stories, you find at this point that people's lives begin to come together. Once they have an experience with God through Jesus Christ they start to know a real peace and sense of purpose.

Not this boy. After that night I got worse and worse. I didn't go on with God. I went back to my caravan in the camping ground and lived the existence of a down and out.

I was drinking two bottles of gin a week, out playing golf every Sunday and then drinking up large at the nineteenth through to the early hours of the morning.

One time we had been playing over in Golden Bay and driving back over the Takaka hill, bombed out of my brain, I nearly drove off the edge. I'd always wake up the next morning and never be able to remember driving home. It was a bit frightening but I managed to shove those sort of thoughts out of my mind before the next session came round.

Then a girl who was living in the camping ground committed suicide. Drugs, I think it was. I found her body. It wasn't nice and the episode shook me.

It was one of those things that I couldn't just block out. It stayed with me — like the experience of going up to the front of the church. I knew there was something there. I knew that I was doing wrong. But I couldn't help myself. I couldn't stop drinking, even if it killed me like that girl. So I thought, what the heck, I might as well just carry on as I am.

About that time I won half a sheep in a raffle at a pub or somewhere. Didn't know what to do with it, then the name of the pastor at the church where Louise went popped into my head.

I shot the meat round to him but he was out. His wife asked me if I'd like to come back and see him the next night. Might as well, I thought, so I



came back and talked.

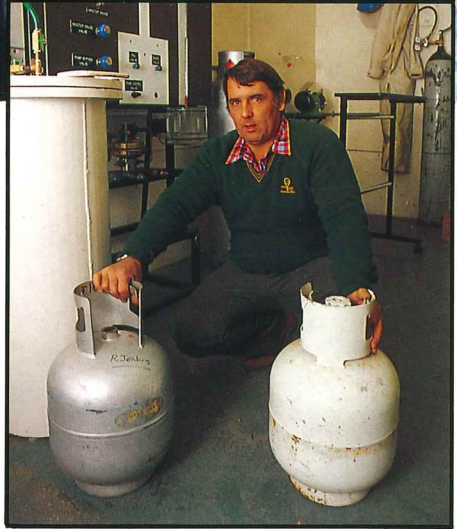
He gave me the guts on what this Christianity was all about and we prayed and I gave my life to God again, asking Jesus Christ to forgive me.

And that was it. I was a changed man from that night.

Within one week I'd stopped drinking booze altogether. I was reunited with Louise and we started working on our relationship God's way. Within two months we had both given up smoking. That was a toughy. We first tried acupuncture in the ear lobe (don't laugh) but that didn't work; then we tried a relaxation course but that had the same result. Finally in desperation, because we were both embarrassed about smoking, we got down on our knees and prayed "Lord, help us".

The next day at work I had a smoke and couldn't handle it. I was violently ill. I tried again with the same result. This had got to be God, I thought, and I've never smoked again.

Thirty years on the weed; two months after beating it Louise and I were married, and I was free at last.



Above: Ted Collier on the job at Nelgas; top: Ted and Louise.

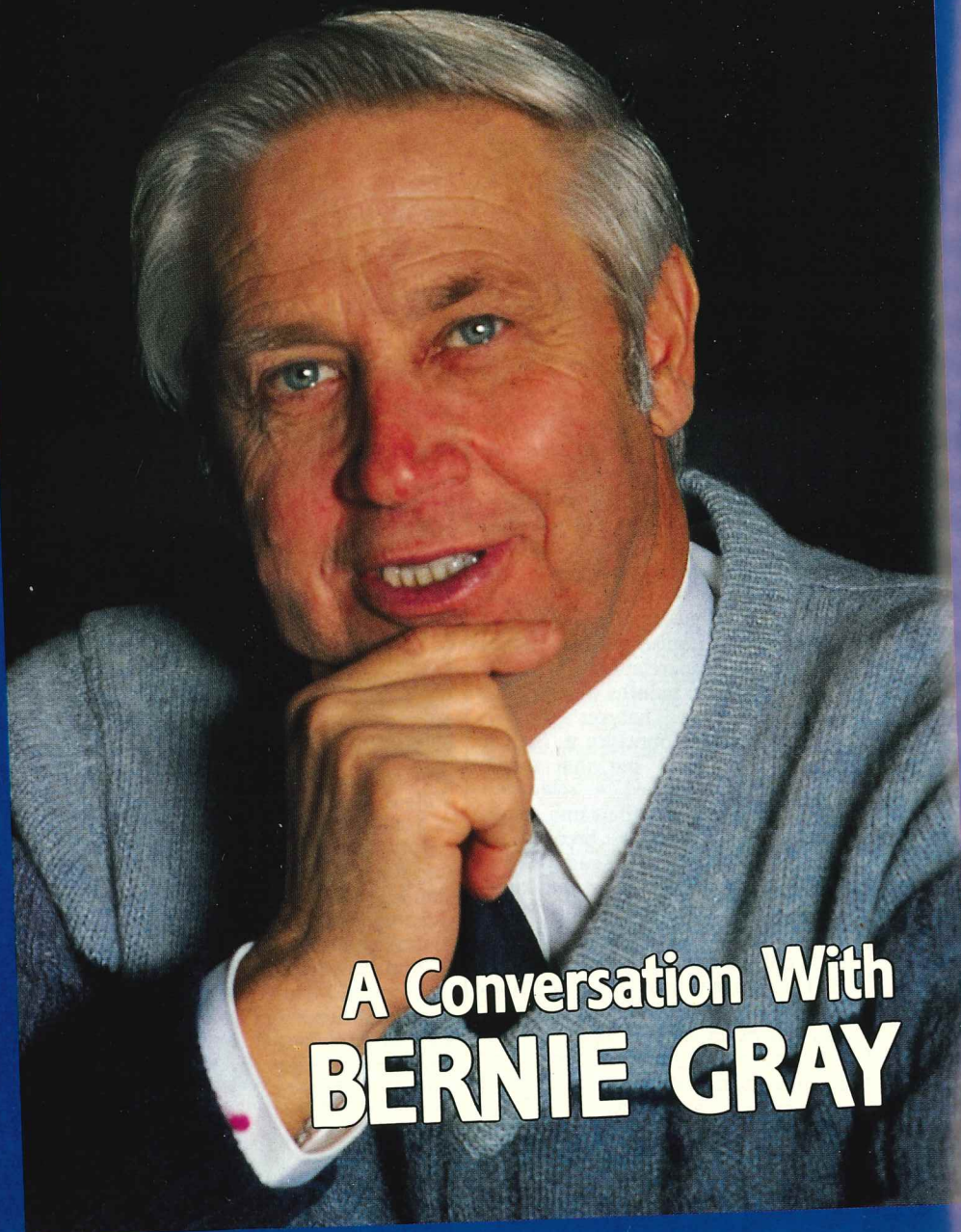
I'm not battling the whole world any longer. I'm not on a downer. I don't have to prove anything to anyone. God loves me, left handed and all.

And knowing that is what counts.

Ted is a member of the local FGBMFI Chapter in Richmond, Nelson, where he lives with his wife Louise. He has a position with Nelgas which he says is a job he enjoys more than any other he has had.



BUSINESS NOTEBOOK



**A Conversation With
BERNIE GRAY**

Bernie Gray is an International Vice-President of Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International. Resident in Brisbane, Queensland, Bernie directs the work of FGBMFI in Australia as well as travelling extensively and ministering world wide to men through the Fellowship.

Bernie's own business life centred around the automotive industry. He was one of the first in Australia to introduce specialisation within the industry by setting up a chain of specialist automatic transmission and air conditioning repair shops.

As a man whose business principles have been forged in the highly competitive world of automobiles, Bernie has strong views on marketing and management practices and how they relate to the spiritual life.

The following interview with Bernie Gray was obtained at the 1986 New Zealand National FGBMFI Convention in Dunedin.

Can you describe how you got your start in business?

I left school at the age of 15 and started an apprenticeship as a motor mechanic. After 3½ years of the 5 year term I assembled a mobile repair unit and began servicing the farming community — repairing tractors, trucks and such like.

When my apprenticeship was completed I went into partnership running a general repair shop. Right from the outset we decided to steer clear of the domestic market and went for fleet maintenance.

We were just small fry in the automotive world — we probably looked like peanuts on a stetson hat — but nevertheless we looked after some big fleets.

After a few years we purchased a building in the centre of Brisbane, developed a vehicle sales outlet and began the specialisation process into

automatic transmission and auto air conditioning repairs and maintenance. These were to be our two key specialist fields for many years.

We had five companies in Queensland, including the Mazda and Renault/Peugeot franchises. Later we introduced Subaru to Queensland.

What influences shaped your approach to business?

During my apprenticeship I had a racing driver friend who said that his aim in life was to make more money than he could spend. Those words sparked something off in me and gave me the attitude of 'Look out, world, here I come!'

Right from the start I was bristling with commercial activity, and always looking for new marketing opportunities. I joined various overseas automotive organisations so that I could keep abreast of trends in my field.

Commercially I was going for everything I could get. My two stated goals were that I would not be pulling wheels off cars when I was 40 and that I would have a son and a daughter by the age of 30.

I achieved both of those goals — but at a price.

What was that price?

My business aspirations would take me out of town for three, four or five weeks at a time. In so doing I shifted the responsibility of the home off my shoulders and on to my wife's. So instead of being governed by the scriptural values I had learned as a child I began to be governed by the desire for a big bank balance.

This led to stress within the family but even more significant was the flow-on effect this initial compromise had in other areas of my business life. Once you make one compromise and sell out on one value it's just a matter of time before you begin selling out in other areas of your life.

It wasn't until 1974 that I realised the extent of my compromise. It was during that year that I went through a crisis in business and private life that shook me to my roots and frankly turned me around.

Can you describe what happened?

1974 was to be the peak of my career in terms of the automatic transmission business.

My wife Nell and I and our family were at a summer holiday camp in December '73. A few minutes before midnight on New Year's eve we were sitting in a large meeting where people were singing, praying and sharing their hopes for the new year.

It was an electrifying atmosphere but I felt uneasy. I asked God point blank: *Is this just euphoria or are you saying something to me?*

Suddenly I got the impression that something dramatic was about to happen — and that it related to my business. On the wall a blackboard appeared, visible only to myself. As the minutes ticked by I saw a division of assets of my partnership being written on that board. All of the details of how the properties were to be divided and the sum of money that would change hands was on that board. At the time I found it totally unexplainable since I had no intention of dissolving the partnership. My partner and I had had 19 years in business together and there seemed no good reason to break up now.

Yet in February, 1974, a situation initiated by my partner arose that meant we could no longer continue together.

It took two months for our accountants and solicitors to get our books in shape and draw up a division of properties but in the final analysis the amount of money that changed hands was not one red cent more or less than what had been written on that blackboard on New Year's eve.

What did this experience mean to you?

It showed me that beyond a shadow of doubt God is more interested in my life than I had ever dreamed was possible.

As a child I had had drummed into me the verse that says: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your paths". (Proverbs 3:5,6)

It wasn't until 1974 that that verse became a reality in my life. All through my business life I had leaned awful heavy on my own understanding, relying on my own judgement and business acumen and not always allowing God His rightful place as "Managing Director".

When I saw how accurately and precisely God had worked out the dissolving of our partnership ahead of time, without any bickering or animosity, I knew I had vastly underestimated His desire to be involved in my business life.

How does the concept of trusting God work out in a business setting? Do you now set aside your natural expertise and judgement and rely totally on divine guidance?

No, natural expertise is a gift of God to help us to do our best. If we have committed ourselves to God and are trusting him, then what we cannot do, he does — often in supernatural ways.

However, you do need to differentiate between a man's natural abilities and his character. The Bible is clear on this point: God commits himself to character, not ability. In a business setting, if you have loyal management staff, you can always increase their skills through training. However, if you go out and hire a hot-shot you may spend all your time trying to keep him loyal — and that's a long track to travel.

I believe that if you want to grow big

business then grow big people — big on character, big on loyalty, big on non-negotiable values.

These days the business world is a high pressure, high risk area. How do you avoid being squeezed into a short-term mould where values are up for grabs in the race to close a deal?

Entrepreneurs have to learn that there is no such thing as a short-term event in business. Sure, this is a pressure-packed world that deals in instant solutions. Sure, there are all sorts of people conjuring up get-rich-quick schemes. But that's a road that leads to disillusionment.

What is business? It is servicing a need, doing it the best way you know how and maintaining repeat business by giving excellent service.

You can have grandiose ideas about being an overnight success but all you'll end up with is an apprentice's smile, an aching heart and no lasting rewards.

The Bible says that to obey is better than sacrifice. I say that you can never compensate by sacrifice those things you lose by disobedience. I have seen men sacrifice their family just to see another dollar in the till but they'll find out, just as I did, that they are the biggest losers.

A man should establish early in life the values he is going to operate on. If he doesn't he will be a vacillator all his life. It is a delusion to think that you have to adapt your values according to the changing world in which we live. The basic values never change.

What have you been doing businesswise since 1974?

After my partner bought me out I started to deal in property investments and also taking over failing companies — businesses that had potential but which had become run down through bad marketing and management.

Often those businesses were in trouble because the man at the top

was a walking disaster with his chequebook and his bankbook. The owner of the business would be living off plastic cards, floating along in a fantasy land and failing to understand the basic principles of business.

Once those basic problems were rectified the businesses could be turned around and would start to show a profit.

In 1978 I built premises in central Brisbane and opened what I called the One Stop Car Clinic. This was a specialist repair shop that did work not usually done in the average service station — steering geometry, suspension, automatic transmissions, auto air conditioning, plus a panel and body shop.

I sold that business in 1983 and since then I have been free to put virtually my entire time into the work of FGBMFI.

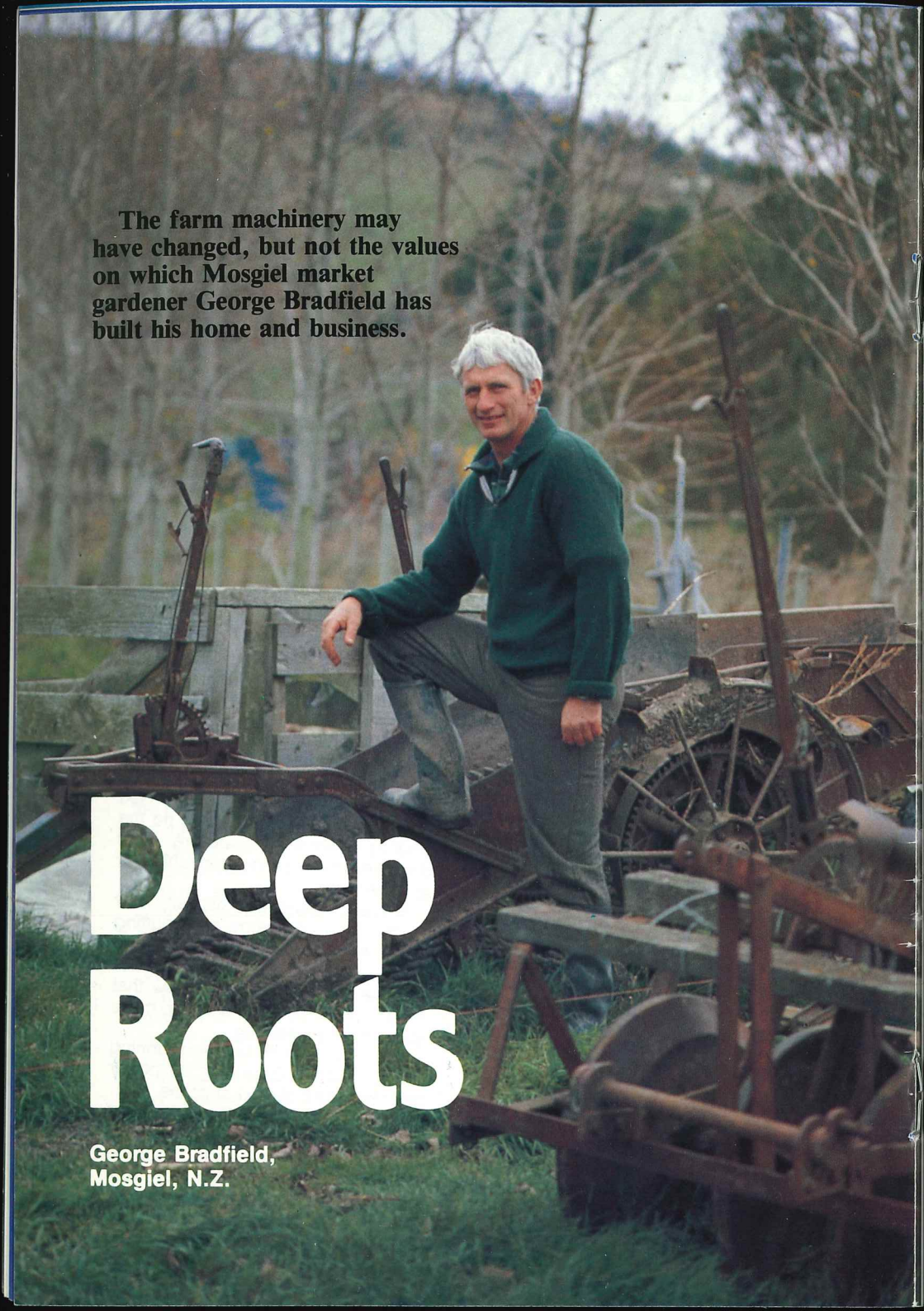
What advice can you give to a young businessman who wants to honour God in his business life?

I think one of the key principles to learn is this: that which is born of the flesh is maintained by the flesh and that which is born of the spirit is maintained by the spirit. Where is God in your business activities? Is he the steering wheel or the spare tyre — the directing force or merely something for an emergency?

A man should ask himself, *how much time and energy am I putting into this project simply to keep it going?* And then he should consider whether in fact he should allow that thing to die or whether he should make some quality changes.

It's the difference between running on adrenalin and running on power that the Spirit of God supplies.

Secondly, don't use God's name as a magic charm. Good commercial increase will result from applying sound Biblical principles not from presuming that you have a sanctified Midas touch!

A photograph of George Bradfield, a man with white hair, wearing a green sweater and grey trousers. He is standing on a wooden cart or trailer filled with various pieces of old, rusty farm machinery, including what appears to be a plow and a wheelbarrow. The background shows a rural landscape with bare trees and a wooden fence. The overall tone is nostalgic and emphasizes traditional farming values.

The farm machinery may have changed, but not the values on which Mosgiel market gardener George Bradfield has built his home and business.

Deep Roots

George Bradfield,
Mosgiel, N.Z.

Loving parents, a few beers, God, swearing, eyeing the girls at church, smoking and tying balloons to cats tails, they all played a part in my childhood. It might sound a strange mixture but it all added up to a lot of happy years for me. I can look back with genuine thanks because I know there are lots of kids who would give their eye teeth to have been in my shoes.

Ours was a solid home. Dad worked hard as a roading contractor during the day and then in the evenings and in his spare time he worked the 40 acre block we owned. We never went out much because there was always something to be done around home, but I never minded that. There was always some form of entertainment to be had with my friends from next door. One of our favourite pranks was to blow up a balloon, tie it to the cat's tail and then send the unfortunate animal into the raspberry patch. The ensuing explosion would make the cat take off as if Old Nick himself was after it.

But there was one day of the week when we did not go out. My mother saw to that. Every Sunday, under sufferance, off we went to Sunday School. Afterwards though, it was back to having a smoke behind the shed, or practising my swearing. Later on I included having a couple of beers in my repertoire of things-your-Sunday-School-teacher-wouldn't-approve-of.

God was OK, I guess. I knew lots about him from Sunday School and Bible Class. I even went on a school Crusaders camp once and someone there asked me if I wanted to give my life to Jesus Christ. Well, I knew enough about such things to realise that would mean having to give up smoking, drinking and swearing, and those things were too important to me at that stage. So I declined the offer.

Church still held an attraction for me though – it was the girls who went. They made the whole exercise of the

weekly outing much more to my liking!

After high school I went on to varsity. Living on a farm had given me a love for the land and I decided I wanted to do something in that line, so I enrolled at Lincoln Agricultural College and studied for a degree in agricultural science.

Four weeks into my first year there I quit going to church. Outgrown it, I figured. Stopped reading the Bible, too. I believed that the study I was getting into would satisfy all the questions of life I had.

It did, too, for the first couple of years. Then all those years of Sunday School and Bible Class way down inside me started to react against what I was learning in the fields of animal physiology and zoology.

Everyone seemed to be big into evolution and I began to feel highly uncomfortable with it all. Somehow God began to seem a safer bet.

Kolynos

I dusted down the good book in an effort to try and find some answers but I couldn't get into it. Then there was this guy I knew – actually everyone knew him. We called him Kolynos because he was always smiling. He was one of those born again type Christians. I asked him about a few things and he explained some scriptures to me, but it still left me dissatisfied.

I was getting behind in my study coming up to exam time in my final year and I began to panic just a little. One night I directed some communication heavenward. I figured he might listen to me since I had been trying to put him all together in my mind over the last few months.

I just said, "God, you're going to have to help me get through this," referring to the exams.

I remember waking up very early one morning a couple of days after that with the thought in my mind that I

ought to study, among other things, the topic of pressure pumps. I swotted it up and you can guess how my confidence leapt in the exam room when I saw the first question was on pressure pumps!

After Lincoln I landed a job as a soil conservator with the Wairarapa Catchment Board in Masterton. It was a position that involved giving advice to farmers on the management of their land to prevent erosion and to get the best out of it. At first it was a bit lonely being in a new place, but in a letter from mum one time she suggested I go to a church and get to meet some people. Seemed like a good idea to me so off I went.

It worked. I met a couple who became friends and through them I met my wife to be. The church I went to was Presbyterian — just like the one in Oamaru — but it had a pentecostal minister which was a bit way out for 1965.

The first time I went he was preaching on the Holy Spirit, which interested me. I went home, read the Bible and thought about what the minister had said. But I couldn't see no Holy Spirit in me, or in anyone else for that matter, so I let it lie for a time.

Healing down the wire

Not too long after this my sister fell ill with a creeping paralysis. She and her dentist husband tried everything to get it cured but nothing seemed to work. My friends asked if she had been prayed for. I'd never thought of that but I figured that if it made her better, my sister wouldn't object.

The long and the short of it was that she got healed — as someone prayed **OVER THE PHONE!** Fair dinkum!

That floored me as you can imagine. But it was nothing compared to what was coming. Chris and I had been married for a while when we learned that the same lady who prayed for my sister was coming to hold meetings in Masterton. Chris was going to the

meetings. I was not. At least that was my intention.

Chris went on the Friday night and got a touch from the Lord. She wanted me to go with her on the Saturday night but to me prayer meetings were pretty dry cake and I wasn't interested. I spent Saturday working in my pine tree seedling bed and it seemed to me that something, or someone, kept saying to me, "If you go tonight you'll never be the same again". It scared me and I told Chris. Somehow I ended up at the meeting with her.

It was strange. People were praying out loud and shouting things like "Hallelujah". I kept wanting to duck out.

Then this lady by the name Kay Furey started to preach and she talked about us all being Davids for Christ, warriors, men of valour. *Dear me*, I thought, *I didn't want to be anything like that*. I lasted through the whole thing and was thankful to escape into the night air at the end of it.

Howling

A cup of tea was offered for supper at a friend's place so Chris and I went round there. We weren't the only ones. There were about 13 others and among them was Kay Furey. She was praying for people. Then she began to tell them about what had happened to my sister and as she talked I began to howl.

I couldn't understand what had come over me. I hadn't cried for years. Being a member of the Wairarapa Bush B rugby team I could take a few knocks and hand them out too! And yet here I was bawling my eyes out. I thought perhaps it was because I was feeling sorry for my sister. But no, it was more than that.

Kay Furey told me that it was the conviction of the Holy Spirit on me. God was trying to get through to me and I dare say he was succeeding.

"Do you know Jesus Christ?" she asked me. Suddenly I flashed back to Sunday School and Bible Class and the

realisation hit me that I knew *about* Jesus Christ *but I didn't know him*.

"I just know about him," I replied.

"Well, we'll lead you to the Lord then," she said.

At her invitation I stood up and started to pray the sinner's prayer after her. I got as far as asking for the cleansing of my soul by the blood of Jesus when all of a sudden I started to shake violently. It was like someone had me by the shoulders and wouldn't let go; just like a dog would shake a cat. I trembled all through my body like there was a scrubbing brush rubbing up and down inside me, leaving me feeling incredibly clean.

I opened one eye to see who was doing all the shaking and to my surprise no one was touching me. They were all too busy praying. My hair stood on end as I realised that God had made himself known to me. I was in his presence and it was like nothing I had ever experienced before. Talk about an earthquake event; this was it.

"You'd better sit down," Kay instructed after a while. "God is going to fill you with the Holy Spirit." So I sat down in a chair and the same sensation which had "cleaned me up" came again with a warm, glowing feeling that relaxed my whole body. I couldn't stand up. I was drunk with the Spirit of God. And I stayed that way for a few hours. I had to be almost carried out to the car to get home. I think Chris had a bit of a job managing me that night.

The next night the Holy Spirit flowed through me with a new language and I began to speak in "tongues". The voice in the seedling plot had been right. I was changed. And I would never be the same again.

Wisdom

That was back in 1966. And since that time I have learned to let God's peace rule in my life. He has given me wisdom in my work situation so that I have been able to help out workmates

and bosses alike with good advice which the Lord has given me on their behalf.

God is relevant in our everyday life, at work or at play. He is the missing dimension that before we get to know him we can't quite put our finger on. He's never let me down.

In 1971 I landed a job with the Otago Catchment Board and Chris and I and the children moved down south. After seven years in the job I began to feel restless and felt like God was getting me ready to move on. I had been working hard, succeeded in doubling the work load and was in need of a good rest.

I had accrued good superannuation and other benefits but they didn't seem important any more. I knew I could just walk away and leave them. And in 1980 I did. I felt it was time to leave my job. I wrote out my resignation and handed it in.

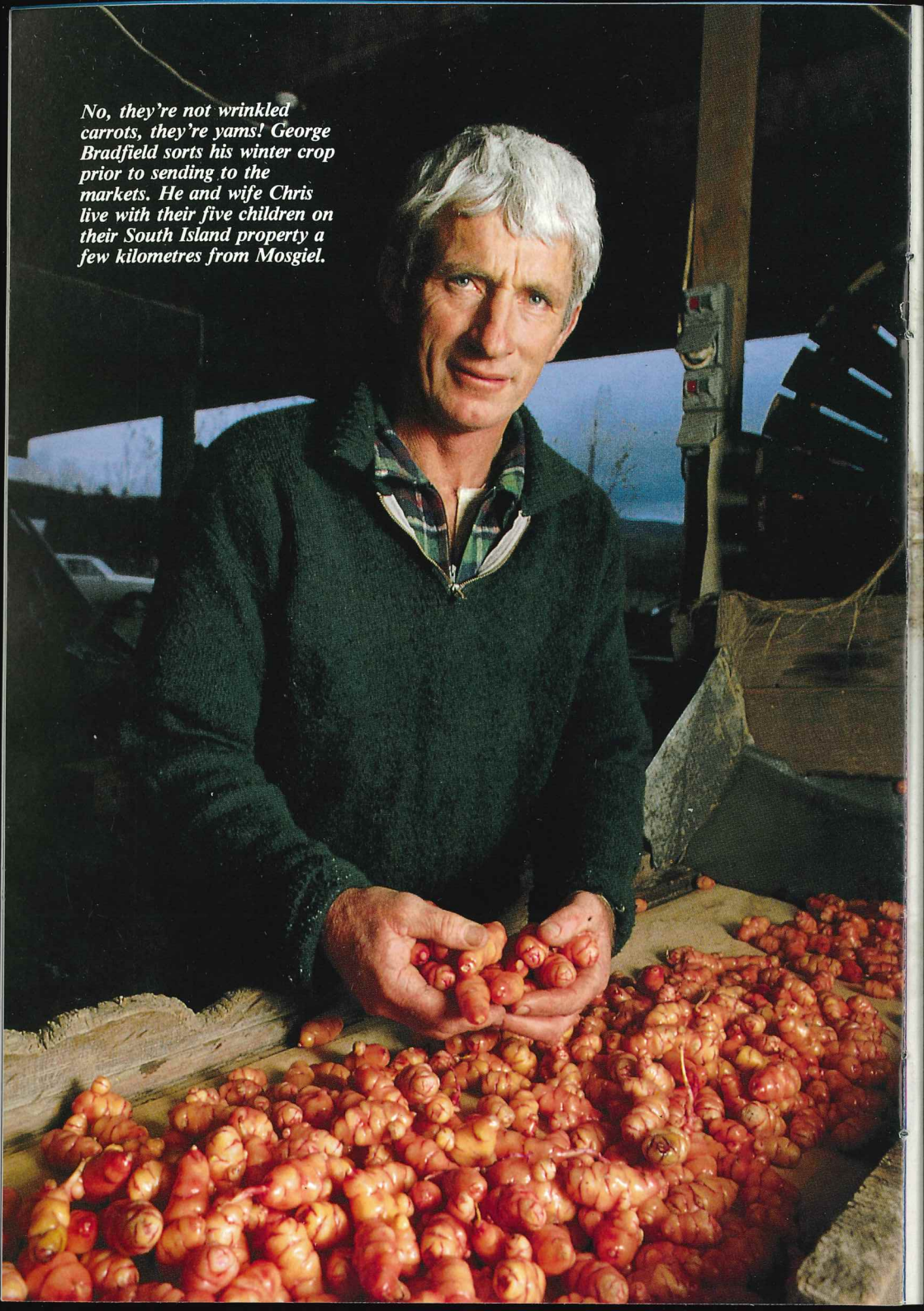
Two days later the Lord showed me the following verses from Proverbs chapter 3. I'd never seen them before and they confirmed that God was in control: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him and he will direct your paths...So shall your barns be filled with plenty, and your presses shall burst out with new wine." (Proverbs 3:5-10)

Now the Lord has established us in a market garden business of our own where we are also developing the cultivation of flowers for both local and export markets.

Loving parents, and God, still play a part in my life; a major part. I believe God has allowed me to create the same solid environment for my own family that I experienced when I was growing up.

It is my belief that from this foundation my own children have been better equipped to face life and to come to terms with their creator.

No, they're not wrinkled carrots, they're yams! George Bradfield sorts his winter crop prior to sending to the markets. He and wife Chris live with their five children on their South Island property a few kilometres from Mosgiel.





Workaholics Anonymous

Bill McLachlan
Coonabarabran, NSW

Most people are born in a hospital; I was born in a police station. Fair dinkum! My dad had cleared off three months earlier, leaving my mother to fend for herself and look after my older sister and me. She ended up staying with his parents and because my grandad was in charge of the Scarborough police station that's where I was born.

That was 1930, the start of the Depression, and they were hard years — especially for a solo mum. To make matters worse, I had to be hospitalised for 16 weeks at the age of 4 when tests showed I had a spot on a lung.

My mother was refused welfare of any description because the courts had awarded her maintenance, the only problem being that she never got any because my father was out of work. Consequently we shifted around a lot as my mother tried to find work. And

because she was usually still at work when I got home from school I drifted into the company of children whose parents neither knew nor cared where they were.

Billiard saloons were where the action was and to a 12 year-old boy the temptation was irresistible. I stole some money and tried my hand at the poker machines. As the saying goes, 'a fool and his money are soon parted', and I soon found myself scrounging from the other boys in order to win back what I'd lost. Fat chance! The saloon keeper saw what I was up to, picked me up by the scruff of my shirt and showed me the door. Which was definitely the best thing he could have done.

Paper runs, milk runs, ice runs, fruit and vegé shops, market gardens

— I worked them all in the attempt to buy some of the things my mother couldn't afford to get me.

When I was 13 my sister went off to work, freeing my from the 'Big Sister is watching you' syndrome. Now I could play truant with impunity and pretty soon I was stealing anything that wasn't bolted down. It wasn't long before the long arm of the law got hold of me — in more ways than one. During my appearance in court a burly police sergeant asked if he could be allowed to arrange suitable disciplinary action for me. That meant being taken into a cell, the door being shut and the leather belt doing its work.

Car mad

I was mad about cars and at 16 I got an apprenticeship with a motor mechanic. I worked on people's cars every spare moment I had. I changed employers three times during the apprenticeship and as a tradesman had almost as many jobs as meals. Always looking for more money; always finding fault with the bosses; never admitting that I could be in the wrong.

I took a lot of girls out but couldn't seem to find Miss Right. Eventually I married a country girl but on the day of the wedding I somehow knew it was wrong and, sure enough, it was a disaster and 12 months later we were divorced. Easy come, easy go — and all heaven weeps.

Then along came Betty. This time I was taking no chances. Our relationship was built on a solid foundation of working together, discussing every conceivable subject under the sun and taking things real slow!

Mind you, working 96 hour weeks for the best part of two years left little time for getting into mischief. I had decided I wanted my own service station and had bought land on the Central Coast for that purpose. My mother acted as chaperone as well as business partner during those two

I was playing truant with impunity and stealing anything that wasn't bolted down.

years, when every weekend we would leave Sydney on Friday night, work at clearing the land and building the workshop and return on Sunday night, totally whacked.

During these years of courtship Betty and I thrashed out every detail of married life — money matters, business matters, likes and dislikes, Christian and moral beliefs, how many children we wanted, the possibility of adoption if necessary, and so on.

When I was 31 we married and moved into the workshop, living in one portion and working in the other. Again it was a seven-day, seven-night working week for me as I strove to gain the capital needed to build a house.

A death in the family

We had two children, Warren and Sue, but at the age of four Warren contracted primary encephalitis and died within 30 hours. His passing was hard for both of us to handle, but especially so for me as I suffered from terrible guilt through not having spent the time to build up a close father-son relationship. What enabled us to cope was the fact that through enrolling Warren at the local Sunday School we had decided to make a commitment to church life and somehow this step brought a sense of destiny into our lives.

Unfortunately I misunderstood Christian commitment to mean being on church committees. In that regard I became very 'committed'. A feeble attempt to spend more time with my family soon faded and the workaholic

in me took over once again. I was on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week. On occasion my employees would even call me out from a church service.

With the loss of Warren we tried to adopt some children so Sue could have some company. (She had been deeply affected by the death of her brother and was becoming introverted.)

We were told that the adoption process would take at least two years, but all I can say is that when God steps into a situation the doors open fast! Only two weeks after our interview with an adoption agency we took David (6) and Mark (4) home for the school holidays. They never returned to the institution and within six months the adoption was complete.

When I was 40 my father became a Christian and sought out my mother, who graciously accepted him back. At first I accepted him begrudgingly, just to please my mother, but later I came to love him as a dad.

Breakdown

During this time my health packed up and I was told I was having a nervous breakdown. The boys did not seem to be mechanically minded, so I sold the business and bought a farming property at Coonabarabran. Though quite financial at this stage, my health continued to fail and our funds were slowly whittled away.

The doctors had no answers. A naturopath who treated me for an extended period likewise achieved nothing — except remove a further sizable chunk of my savings.

I sank into a sea of despair. Being a man who loved work, my mind kept whirling with the thoughts of jobs that needed to be done, but my body failed to respond.

In desperation I would rise from the chair in which I sat, saying, "I *will* work!" But with my head spinning and my legs like jelly I would be forced to subside into the chair where

the accusing thoughts would start once again.

This situation brought on frequent outbursts of foul language and violent temper. Out of sheer frustration I would lash my wife and children with my tongue. I was a street angel and a house devil.

Remarkably, I was appointed an elder in the church and began preaching. A bigger hypocrite never graced a pulpit — I was a one-hour a week Christian.

David cleared out when he was 15 and Mark followed suit at 18. Both left no forwarding address and we lost contact with them for years. The only ray of hope spiritually was in the form of Sue, who was attending a young people's Bible study and was getting interested in something called the charismatic movement. I advised her strongly to keep away from this 'hokey pokey business'.

Nevertheless, in 1982 Sue received the fullness of the Holy Spirit and began praying with her friends for Betty and me. We only found this out from one of the local busybodies and were upset that she hadn't confided in us. But you couldn't deny the maturity and quality of her life. She had a tremendous understanding of the Bible and seemed to quietly radiate with a peace that was foreign to me.

When we approached her for an explanation she gently showed us the relevant Bible verses and gave us a book to read on the subject. We were convinced that this was something God wanted us to have and both received the baptism in the Holy Spirit, with the wonderful sign of speaking in tongues.

Nausea

Unfortunately, my other brand of 'tongues' — the verbal abuse variety — continued unabated, much to the consternation of Betty, who was hoping for some improvement in the home. To make matters worse, I

couldn't even walk six feet without nausea, a wildly spinning head, and breaking out in a cold sweat. I felt totally wretched.

At last the problem was diagnosed: a blocked coronary artery. It was November 1983, and on the Sunday night following this news I struggled along to church, hoping for some sort of comfort.

I was unable to sing — just breathing was hard enough. After the service the preacher called me out the front to pray for me. I didn't go much on this 'laying on of hands' stuff. Reckoned my prayers were as good as the next guy's. (If the truth be known I wasn't exactly doing much praying of any kind.)

The symptoms continued, but the following month a specialist pronounced the verdict that I was 'unique' — the blockage had gone. After 14 years of regular visitation to the doctor, finally, in January 1984, I paid my last visit and soon after the symptoms disappeared.

Probably the biggest change happened shortly afterwards, when, at a Full Gospel Businessmen's meeting, I heard a message about the need to forgive those who have hurt us. I became aware during the meeting of a deep-seated resentment and bitterness towards my father, who by this stage had been dead six years. I had thought that my love and acceptance of him once he had returned home to my mother was enough to undo the hurts of the past, but I found that when I brought the issue out into the open and confessed my unforgiveness to God a deep healing took place. A fresh love, joy and peace sprang up in my life and Betty found she had a new husband.

For the first time I experienced genuine remorse over the hell I had put my wife and children through. I had only one ambition: to put things right with them. Betty and Sue both wept openly when I told them how

sorry I was and asked them to forgive me. They had never heard those words from me before + at least, never seriously.

The boys were a bit harder to track down but eventually I did, and God has since moved remarkably in their lives, to the point where they are now both Christians.

Religious gloss

I've lived all my life as a self-centred man. The rest of the world could go to hell, as far as I was concerned. In actual fact, I was the one heading down that road — despite the religious gloss I cultivated.

My thoughts are now focused on the needs of others. It's almost a passion with me to see men and women set free from sin in the name of Jesus Christ. And whereas before there was no team spirit between Betty and myself, now I enjoy nothing better than to pray together for others, be it in the area of healing or in leading them to the Prince of Peace.



Above: pictured with their daughter, Sue.

Betty and Bill worship at the Uniting Church in Coonabarabran, where they also work as part-time parish assistants. Bill is the counselling secretary of Coonabarabran's chapter of FGBMFI.



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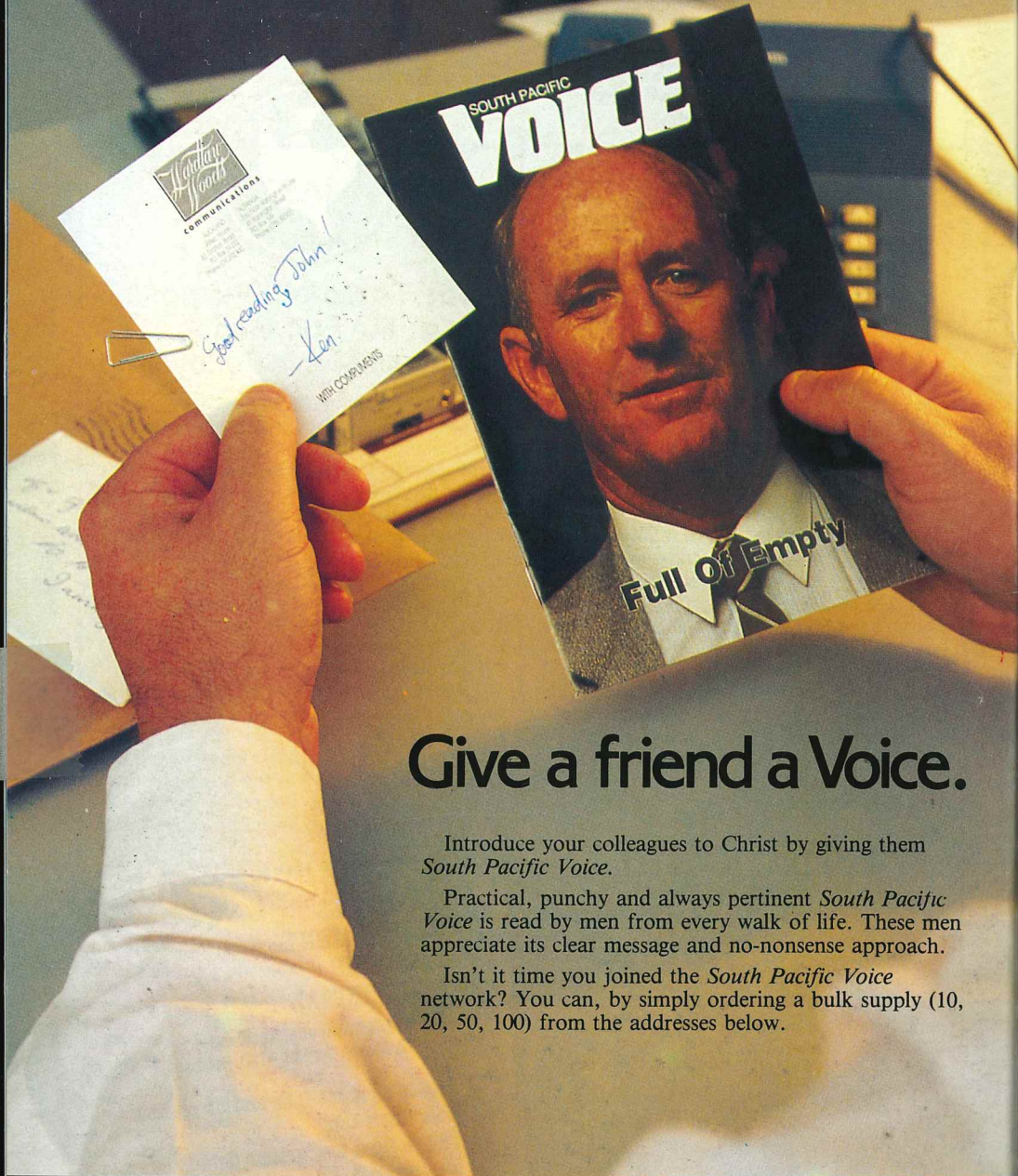
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