

THE LIFE STORY BOOK
OF BERYL DONNAN

COMPILED IN MARCH 2013

I was born (Beryl Louise Sims) in Sydney, Australia, on 20th June 1937 in the suburb called Abbotsford near the western part of the south shore of Sydney Harbour. (The Opera House wasn't built then.)



SYDNEY HARBOUR
SHOWING ABBOTSFORD

My father built houses. He was blinded in a building accident when I was 7. But he went on building and I helped look after him for 20 years.

ME ON A BEACH
NEAR HOME



I went to Fort Street Girls High School which was near the south end of the Sydney Harbour Bridge.



SYDNEY HARBOUR
BRIDGE

ME AT AGE 14
WITH MY LITTLE SISTER
VALMA



When I went to Sydney University we were living at Dee Why, one of the northern coastal beaches of Sydney. I was quite good at body-surfing.



LONG REEF AND
DEE WHY BEACH
FROM MY PARENTS'
BALCONY

DEE WHY BEACH



I travelled to university each day across the Harbour Bridge by bus or sometimes I travelled across the harbour by ferry.



A FERRY ON SYDNEY
HARBOUR

I graduated BA from Sydney University when I was only 19.
I began school teaching straight away.

ME AT GRADUATION
IN 1957
WITH MY FATHER
ON THE LEFT





For my 21st birthday my mother took me on a round-the-world cruise from Sydney to Europe.

MY MOTHER MEETING THE
CRUISE SHIP'S CAPTAIN
IN 1958
WITH ME BEHIND HER

We sailed to Europe through the Suez Canal and then home through the Panama Canal.

ME ON A CAMEL
AT THE PYRAMIDS
IN 1958



We visited London and other parts of England in 1958.



ME AT CLOVELLY
IN MY LONG SKIRT
IN 1958

ME VISITING KING'S COLLEGE CAMBRIDGE IN 1958



I met my future husband Stuart at a Children's Special Service Mission (CSSM) beach mission soon after, at the end of 1958. He was a medical student then.



At the beginning of 1962 I went to Western Australia to work as Traveling Secretary for the Inter-School Christian Fellowship (ISCF) and in 2 years I drove 40,000 miles by myself around Western Australia (in a VW beetle) visiting schools. (The car went across the Nullarbor Plain on the same train as me.

MY VW BEETLE
IS LIFTED ONTO
THE TRAIN
TO CROSS THE
NULLARBOR
PLAIN





I drove lots of children around in my Beetle.

I had an interesting team of people to work with. I met John Prince (in the middle of the photo) and Dulcie Lampard again in Perth at Christmas 2011, 50 years after I started work there with them.



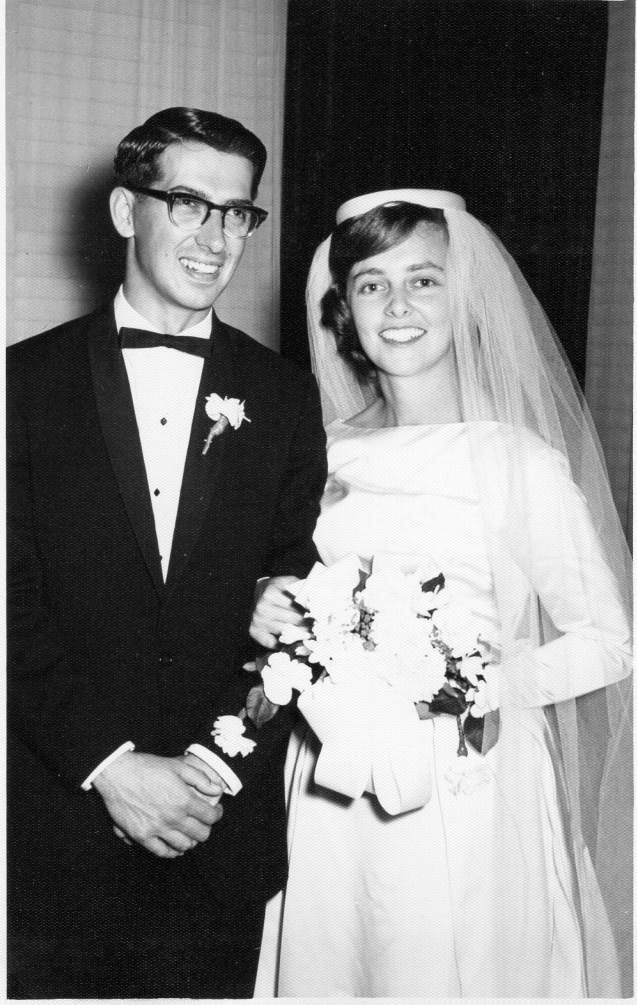


Stuart and I became engaged when he graduated at the end of 1962.

STUART AS A
JUNIOR DOCTOR

STUART AND I
IN SYDNEY
NEAR THE TIME
OF OUR ENGAGEMENT





I left Western Australia and returned to Sydney at the beginning of 1964 to get married.

OUR WEDDING ON 8TH
FEBRUARY 1964

At the end of 1965 we sailed to England on the old Oriana (disembarking in Southampton) for Stuart to take his surgical specialty examinations and training.

THE ORIANA IN SYDNEY
WHERE WE BOARDED THE SHIP



We lived in West London and I worked as a supply teacher.

Stuart obtained his Fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons of England in 1967.



STUART AND I
OUTSIDE THE ROYAL COLLEGE
OF SURGEONS
IN LONDON

Our son Michael was born in
London in February 1968.

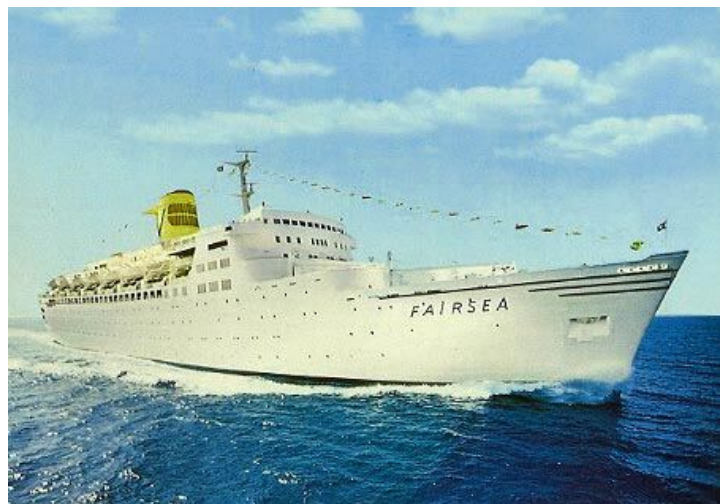


In September 1968 we sailed from Southampton back to Sydney (on the Fairsea) around the Cape of Good Hope because the Suez Canal was closed. Mike was 7 months old when we arrived back in Sydney.



STUART AND BABY MIKE AT
A SAFETY DRILL ON THE
FAIRSEA

THE FAIRSEA
AT SEA



We had planned to train to work as medical missionaries in South East Asia or East Africa or the Middle East but I was unwell (pregnancy problems and depression) and the plans did not work out.

We spent a year in Sydney with little Mike growing up.

MIKE AGED ALMOST 2
WITH HIS BIKE
AND TEDDY



Then unexpectedly Stuart was offered a surgical job back in London and we flew back to England as soon as we could – at the beginning of 1970.

We lived in West London again, and in January 1971 our daughter Alison was born.



ALISON (7 WEEKS PREMATURE)
IN AN INCUBATOR
AT 3 DAYS OLD

WITH MY MOTHER
AND LITTLE MIKE
AND BABY ALISON
IN EALING,
WEST LONDON



When Alison was 1 year old we moved for Stuart and myself to become wardens of a hostel for married overseas students in Clapham, facing Clapham Common.



LITTLE ALI AND MIKE
OUTSIDE THE
GEORGIAN BUILDING
OF GILMORE HOUSE

ALI AND MIKE
ENJOY A SEASIDE HOLIDAY
AT FRINTON-ON-SEA
IN ESSEX



Michael and Alison grew up at Gilmore House with children from many different countries and we made many friends, some of whom Stuart will see while he is in Australia and I am staying in Little Brook House.



CHILDREN FROM
15 DIFFERENT
COUNTRIES
PLAYED
TOGETHER

A PRIZE-WINNING
PHOTOGRAPH OF
LITTLE ALI AND MIKE
AT GILMORE HOUSE



While we were in Clapham, Stuart went to the London School of Hygiene for further training in social medicine.



In 1975 we moved to live in Southampton because Stuart had a position on the staff of Southampton Medical School.

OUR FIRST HOUSE IN NORTHLANDS GARDENS

I became the first Parish Administrator for Highfield Church in Portswood.



Then in 1980 Stuart was appointed as one of the Foundation Professors for a new medical school in the Chinese University of Hong Kong and we all moved to Hong Kong in 1981.



NEW ARRIVALS IN HONG KONG

OUR APARTMENT
OVERLOOKING
TOLO HARBOUR
IN THE NEW
TERRITORIES
OF HONG KONG



I worked as a school teacher in Hong Kong, the last 5 years being at an excellent Chinese school with many very able girls.

ME AT DIOCESAN
GIRLS SCHOOL
IN HONG KONG



Our children both came back to do A levels at King Edward VI School in Southampton, and both then went to medical school – Mike in Southampton and Ali in Nottingham.

In 1990 we came back to Manchester for Stuart to be a professor in the Medical School there.



We lived in Didsbury and that was a very happy and fulfilling time for me. I was very involved in the parish church and did a lot of organising and also teaching and preaching.

MIKE GRADUATED
FROM MEDICAL
SCHOOL
SOON AFTER
ALI STARTED



In 1997 I graduated from Manchester University with an MA in Theology with Feminist Studies.

ON MY GRADUATION
DAY WITH STUART
WHO WAS PART OF
THE ACADEMIC
PROCESSION





In late 1997 we moved back to London for Stuart to work with the NHS. We lived almost on Southwark Bridge.

I became a steward at the Globe Theatre which was just around the corner from where we lived.

I enjoyed time for art galleries and theatres and opera and shops.





Mike and Annie's daughter Lucy was born in Sydney at the end of 1998.

At the end of 1999 Mike married Annie at Highfield Church in Portswood.

Lucy was 1 at the time of the wedding.





Also at the end of 1999 we bought a holiday house on the water in Rustington near Littlehampton in West Sussex.



Stuart and Mike enjoyed sailing from the beach just outside our back garden.

In May 2000 we were visiting Mike in Southampton for the weekend when I suffered a stroke. There were 3 doctors, 1 nurse and 1 radiographer there with me.

I was taken to Southampton General Hospital, to the A&E department where Stuart had been a consultant 20 years previously.

My rehabilitation was at Ashurst Hospital. Stuart had to stop work to look after me, and we moved from London to live permanently in Rustington.



Our daughter Ali married Hugh in Nottingham in 2003 (on our 39th wedding anniversary). Little Lucy aged 5 was the flower girl. Ben was 3 years old.

ALISON'S FIRST DAUGHTER
THEA WAS BORN
IN NOTTINGHAM
IN 2004





We moved in 2005 back to Southampton because I felt I knew the place well, and Rustington was very quiet and a little isolated.

We have many old friends in Southampton as well as our son Mike and his family.

OUR GARDEN ROOM AT NIGHT
WITH ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH SPIRE

I enjoy living in our house by Southampton Water and the docks for cruise ships, and also close to John Lewis and West Quay.



VIEWS FROM OUR
LIVING ROOM



WITH FRIENDS
FROM OUR
MEDITATION GROUP
IN OUR GARDEN
ROOM



OUR LITTLE COURTYARD
GARDEN WITH
A WATERFALL (TURNED OFF
IN THE PHOTO)

Stuart takes me out to the New Forest and Winchester and other places in our car which I like very much.

We take the train to London to the Royal Academy and other places from time to time.



For a special birthday treat Stuart took our family and friends to lunch in the New Forest in a red London Bus.

ME IN A VERY SUMMERY OUTFIT FOR THE SPECIAL BIRTHDAY OUTING



We have been able to have some interesting holidays, including a Mediterranean cruise, over the years since the stroke.

ME LOOKING AT ONE OF MONET'S VERY LARGE WATERLILY PAINTINGS IN THE ORANGERIE IN PARIS



STUART
AND ME ON
A LOVELY
HOLIDAY IN
VENICE



ME WALKING THE LABYRINTH
AT GRACE CATHEDRAL IN
SAN FRANCISCO



AT THE GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE
IN SAN FRANCISCO

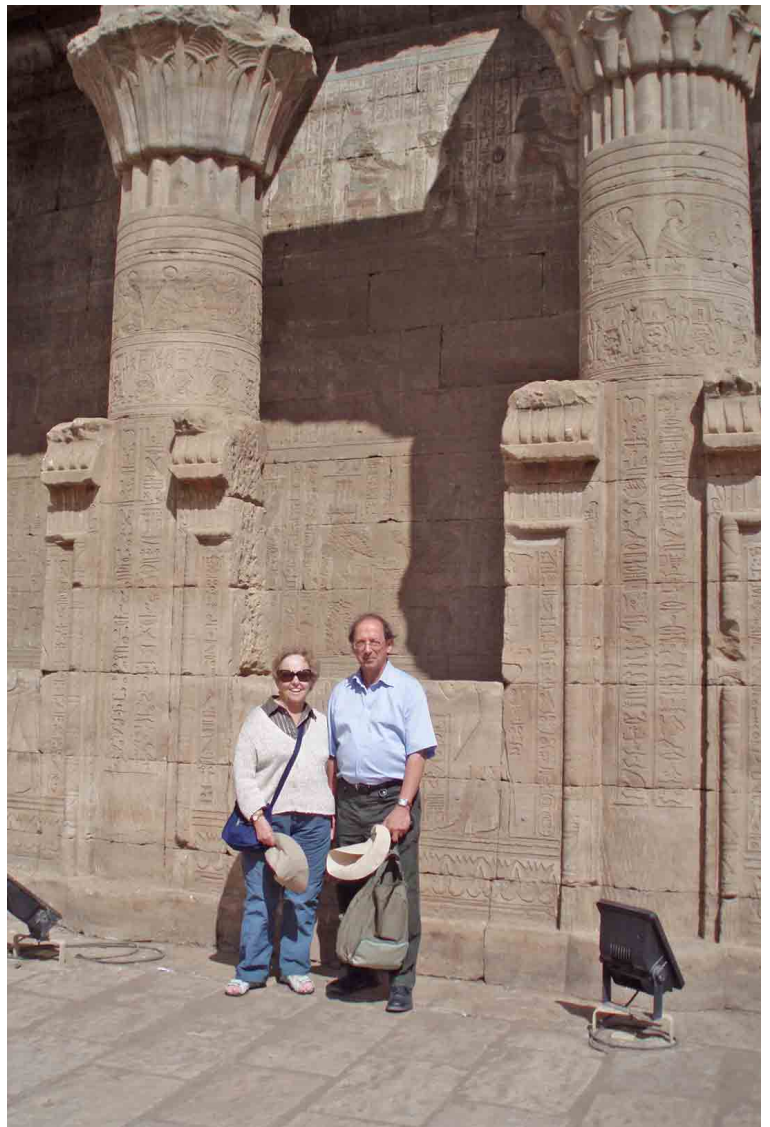


WITH STUART IN
MONUMENT VALLEY
IN UTAH/ARIZONA, USA

ME AT THE GRAND CANYON



WITH STUART IN EGYPT



ON THE RIVIERA



IN FLORENCE
WITH
MICHANGELO'S
DAVID

ME IN BARCELONA
LAST YEAR





IN THE MED

MY 75TH
BIRTHDAY
ON BOARD
AFTER A DAY
IN ROME



IN GOOD SPIRITS
AT A WEDDING
RECEPTION OF
A YOUNG FRIEND

OUR 40TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY AT AMBERLEY CASTLE
(and Ali and Hugh's first anniversary too)



MY FAVOURITE - ICE CREAM!!



IN AUSTRALIA
FOR STUART'S
MOTHER'S
100TH BIRTHDAY

MA IN HER
GARDEN
AT 102

(She died at 104.)





IN CANBERRA WITH BERYL'S SISTER VALMA
AND HER HUSBAND NEVILLE.
(He was the site engineer for the new
Parliament House in the background.)



WITH ALI AND MIKE AT ALI'S 40TH BIRTHDAY PARTY



OUR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN
IN THE NEW FOREST, CHRISTMAS 2012



Our grandchildren are Lucy (now 14) and Ben (now 12) who live in Southampton, and two little girls, Thea (now 8) and Rowan (turning 7 while I am at Little Brook House in March 2013) who live in Nottingham.



LUCY AND BEN
(NOW AT THE GREGG
SCHOOL)

ROWAN AND THEA
ON A BEACH IN SPAIN

