



Rick Sarre, Tony Prescott,  
Debra Sarre, Jocelyn Prescott

**FRIENDSHIP.** Such an important word. It conjures up so many thoughts and memories for us all. The ability to make friends and maintain them throughout life is so particularly important to me and the friendships I have sustain me through the good times and the not so good.

It is something that I reflect on as I get older and I wonder what influenced me during my childhood to form the view that friends are one of the most important aspects of our community and social fabric. I remember my mother, Gloria Prescott, had a very dear friend that we used to visit at Dulwich Hill in Sydney when I was a young child that I knew only as "Mrs Mac". She was the neighbour that lived next door when mum was first married and obviously was an important support for my mother as she grappled with the challenges of a new marriage and then motherhood.

My father, Milton, maintained a close friendship with a childhood friend he met at infants school. He was Mum and Dad's best man at their wedding and their friendship was still strong until their deaths eighty years later.

For myself, it has always been easy, I think, to make friends. I feel that my personality and easy going nature helps to make people feel comfortable around me. Throughout school, there were some friends who became mates. It is a very important time of life where we spend more times with our peers at school than we do with our families. It was a time where you learn that not all have the same views as you, come from similar families or have the same skills. That is one of the important aspects of true friendship. To accept people as friends despite differences of opinion or culture.

The Church Family has always been important and those friendships developed in Sunday School, Pathfinders and Zion's League and then Leadership Camps and Graceland College Winter Terms are still as strong today. Although distance keeps us physically apart, the strong binds of friendship are as tight as ever.

The workplace is another place where we can form close ties with colleagues and those we

interact with throughout our careers. In fact it was in 1980 in the office at the shipping agency I was working at that I met and became friends with someone who has become my best friend and companion, my wife Jocelyn. We married in 1987 and through the preschool and primary school years with our children we have met and continued to enjoy the close friendship of the parents of our children's friends, and indeed their children as well.

The friendships that I have made over my lifetime fill me with joy. The memories. The shared experiences. The intimate discussions. The mutual trust that exists. Knowing that no matter what may befall me or them, the fact that we are friends means that we each know we are never alone or abandoned. Our friends are our anchor that provide a further purpose to our lives.

The generation I belong to has seen the world change in so many ways. The writing of letters to remain in touch with our friends as our parents did was replaced by texting and now "social media" platforms which means we can exchange our ideas and thoughts with our friends instantly. We are able to reconnect with old friends in such an easy way with Instagram or Facebook. I once read that sociologists have deduced that you can only maintain close friendship with around 150 people. I think I may have a few more than that and each and everyone of them I know I can rely on to help and support me if I needed it.

It is important to nurture your friendships and to continue to make new ones. It is what I have done all my life. It is what I learned from my parents not in so many words but in their actions. My life and I believe the lives of those around me are better for it because it enriches us to experience the love and diversity of ideas of our friends. And I like to think that I can call each and every one of you who are reading this "my friend".

**TONY  
PRESCOTT  
QUORROBOLONG  
NSW**