



Vale Ralph Edward Ferrett

Dad, Uncle, Cousin, Gramps, Grandad, Husband, Friend, teacher, student ... whatever name we knew him by Ralph Edward Ferrett lived a life which impacted so many others he will live on in our lives and the lives of those who knew him.

To the Community of Christ church members, he was a man of great faith, easy to talk ideas over with, always encouraging and supporting leaders adding his unique sense of humour ensuring everyone was included.

Ralph Edward Ferrett was born 23 December 1928 in Arncliffe NSW. His father was a fruitier and his mother a teacher. He had two sisters, Beryl and Gwen and a brother Denis.

Ralph's first job was for his father at ten years of age. He would get his wheel barrow and deliver customer orders every Saturday morning for which he was paid two shillings (20 cents).

Ralph started school at Abbotsford school, Five Dock, and attended there until sixth class. It was in Kinder he first fell in love ... with his teacher Miss White. Ralph said "she was the most beautiful person I ever met" but it was much later when. His father asked him to drive his mother, brother and sister to Tiona, the church camp grounds, that he was introduced to Beryl Judd, sister of his good friend Pearce. Before the end of camp Ralph knew there was something special in this relationship and when Beryl had to return with her family to New York it was no surprise Ralph looked for any opportunity to head off, on the SS Neptuna on 3 July 1952 not knowing what lay ahead. His ship docked in New York on 15 August after an adventurous six weeks.

Ralph commenced studies at Graceland College working 21 hours a week in the kitchen at 30 cents an hour to cover his costs. He and Beryl announced their engagement and were married at Lamoni on 27 May 1952 both dressed in borrowed clothes. Their names can still be seen scratched into the school foundation stone surrounded by a map of Australia.

In 1953 they moved to Canada to take up a teaching position in a one teacher school in Wyarton, Ontario. Ralph worked his way up the school system in Kitchener and over the next seven years Ralph and Beryl lived in five homes teaching in three different schools. Ralph finished his degree at the university of Western Ontario, and they commenced their family with Greg (1954), Paul (1956) and Katherine (1958).

Ralph took on a full-time role with the Community of Christ and was initially assigned to the Ottawa branch of the church. One day a telegram arrived reading "If there is any reason why you could not accept an assignment to the orient, cable immediately" and was signed by the president of the church.

Here they were, Ralph just 33 years old with three young children and (unknown to them at the time) Peter was on the way, going on the adventure of their life to South Korea. They landed in Seoul just after a military take over.

For nearly eight years Ralph worked with refugees and locals, and he told stories of working with witch doctors and some of the shenanigans they would get up to.

In 1969 the family moved back to Australia where Ralph took up a role with the church looking after the Newcastle district and the NSW North Coast. He resigned his role with the Church and took up a full time teaching role at Taree High School where he was the History and English Master until he retired.

When asked what he did for most of his life he would respond 'I spent most of my life retired'(36 years when he passed away), but this was only on the surface as he was involved in so many things.

In retirement Ralph became busier than ever. He was secretary of the Port Macquarie Neighbourhood Centre where community transport and neighbourhood aid was established.

Ralph and Beryl worked on a project that became an annual feature in Port Macquarie – a booklet listing all voluntary agencies printed by the 'Port Macquarie News' and delivered to every home in the Hastings area.

One year the centre volunteers nominated Ralph and he was named the Port Macquarie State Premiers Award for that year.

Ralph and Beryl joined the Port Macquarie Historical Association and became very involved. In 1999 Ralph wrote the book "Federation comes to Port Macquarie". This book won the best book produced in a three year period in the chamber of commerce competition.

Bush walking, singing in the Port Macquarie choristers, reception at the museum, travelling to various church functions and camps was all a part of their life.

We give thanks to God for Ralph's long and fruitful life, his love for learning, history, teaching, preaching. He was a wonderful mentor and encourager.. He was prayerful, cheerful, thoughtful and faithful. He loved the Lord God with all his heart, might, mind and strength. He loved Beryl and the family. He loved the church and served it faithfully. He loved church camps He loved people. . He loved the garden, history and genealogy, he loved nature, He loved coffee and ice cream. He loved his community and served it wherever it was in the world, he called home. He loved to learn and write and teach. The world has been a richer place with Ralph Ferrett being part of it

Well done good and faithful servant!