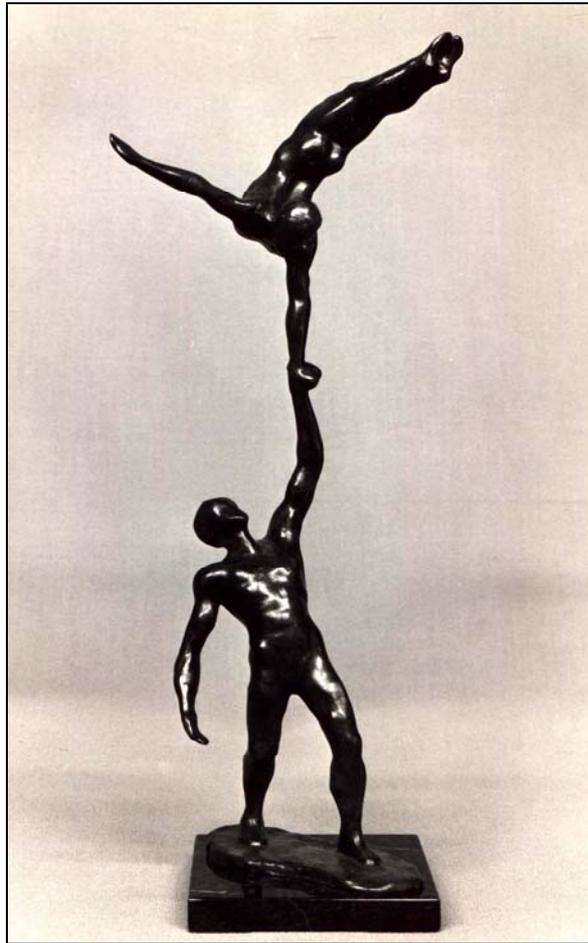


THE ACROBATS

As soon as we arrived home I started to build the armature for *The Acrobats* using the 16-inch high maquette to guide me. I was immediately faced with a problem as I planned to make this sculpture 16-foot tall. There was no way I was going to be able to sculpt the two figures in one piece so they would have to be done separately. I decided that I would stop the bottom figure just above the interlocking hands. The maquette gave me the position needed for the join at the wrist, so hopefully it would look right when they were joined together after Roy had cast them. I hung both armatures from the barn's roof beams, as I had done with the *Hammer Thrower*. When the armature was finished the figures looked frighteningly large!



'The Acrobats' maquette – 16 inches high

I started to cover the base armature with clay and soon had the Big Man fleshed out. I decided to think of them as bathers fooling around on the beach as, contrary to what I had seen in Greece, these boys could not be naked! Apart from that I would try to make them look as much as possible like muscular Greek heroes.

As soon as the figures were finished I asked Roy to come down to take a mould. He arrived with a trailer full of plaster and all the other bits and pieces that were needed. We would have to hire a truck to take the mould to London when it was finished, as it certainly wouldn't fit in his trailer. Roy started work

immediately and had the two moulds ready for shipping back to his garage in three days! How he was going to get them into a workshop that was intended for a small car was quite beyond my imagination, but he seemed to be completely unfazed by the size of the job and I asked no questions. He promised he would have the job done in time for the next Chelsea Flower show, which I thought would be a miracle.

On saying goodbye to *The Acrobats* I again suffered from serious withdrawal symptoms, so immediately got stuck into doing the *Flute Players*. Having just finished athletic men I decided it was time to do three curvaceous girls. One would be about fifteen, another twelve, and the last three years old. The two elder ones would play flutes and the youngest one a triangle. As sculpting the female forms was so different to doing the male figures, it soon got *The Acrobats* out of my mind.



The 12-year-old 'Flute Player' in clay

The 12-year-old girl was one of the most satisfying children sculptures that I ever did. There is something incredibly endearing about the innocence of that feminine age. I took her pose from a magazine and a friend's daughter sat for a photograph for the 15-year-old.

I am not sure exactly how it happened but at the time that I was working on these figures I was approached by Barnstaple Council, who said they would

like to commission me to do some figures for the foyer of their new building. They came out to Marwood to talk to me and I showed them the finished clay figures of the *Flute Players*. They liked what they saw and bought them on the spot. When Roy had cast them they installed them around a pool just inside the entrance to the Barnstaple Council Offices, where presumably they still are.



The left-handed 'Flute Players'

The troubles began when an article appeared in the local paper saying that no one played the flute left-handed, claiming that all flutes were made to be played by right-handed people. The paper said that I had made the Council out to be an ignorant *bunch of yokels* and the sculptures should be removed immediately! Thank goodness a flautist from the Manchester Orchestra who lived in Barnstaple happened to read the article and wrote to the paper and told them that he was a left-handed flute player!

Roy rang up and told me that *The Acrobats* were finished and ready to be assembled. To do this we would have to move the bottom figure out onto his driveway and then add the top man. Could I please come up and help.

By the time I arrived the following day Roy already had the Big Man out of the garage, lying on his side. We carried the top man out and slipped his arm over a pipe that joined the two figures and together we heaved *The Acrobats* upright. The first time we saw them standing there as one piece was quite a moment for us both. The wrists fitted perfectly and although I say it myself, *The Acrobats* looked pretty good and we were both absolutely thrilled. Roy had done another amazing job and every time I look at them in our garden, I am staggered that he was able to complete such a feat, but then he was a truly great craftsman and I should not be surprised. The man's a wonder!

I drove into town and went to see Enzo. I was dying to show him the finished sculpture and asked him if he would be able to come and have a look the following day. We drove out together in the morning and I shall always remember his face when we arrived outside Roy's house and saw *The Acrobats*

standing in the driveway. The whole street was also amazed and Roy's neighbours all came to gawk at the sculpture. The next problem was what to do with it! Crowther didn't want to show *The Acrobats* at the Flower Show beside the children sculptures, which was disappointing. I needed a setting to take some photographs so I asked my godmother, Angela, (who had saved my life by giving me the money to buy a typewriter in New Zealand), if I could put the figures up on her enormous lawn. When she agreed Roy hired a truck and we took *The Acrobats* for their first ride.

As we were able to drive out onto the lawn we placed the sculpture right in the middle! We were becoming experts at the job and could have the sculpture up and down again in a trice.



The Acrobats

We thought they looked all right standing out in the middle of the lawn but Angela didn't want to keep them, so again Roy had to ask his friend if we could borrow his shed while I had another think about what to do next.

At the beginning of the year we had all been shaken by the tragic road accident in which the young wife of Jeremy Thorpe, our local MP, had been killed in a car crash. The tragedy was made even worse by the fact that the couple had a one-year-old son who fortunately was not in the car at the time of the accident. One evening I was surprised to have a call from Jeremy asking if he could come and see me. He arrived a couple of days later and said he had seen the font cover in Marwood Church and liked it. He then asked me if I would be able to do a memorial sculpture of his wife from photographs. As we talked it came to me that perhaps the sculpture could be a Madonna and Child, so I suggested the idea to him. He agreed immediately and asked if I would start work as soon as I received the photographs.



'Caroline and Rupert', Jeremy Thorpe's wife and son

The sculpture was fairly simple, involving only a bust of the mother holding her son, so did not take long to do. Roy did his usual superb casting job and Jeremy said he was extremely pleased with the result. Soon afterwards he arranged a memorial piano recital by Moya Lympny in the Barnstaple Town Hall with the sculpture on the piano. It was quite an evening and very moving. The Council named the new Barnstaple hospital after Caroline Thorpe and the sculpture was placed in the foyer when the building was opened.

Jeremy told me that he had been asked to open the Summer Exhibition at the Royal Academy of Arts that year. He had shown the President my sculpture and asked if the bust could be included in the exhibition.

The President told me later that if it hadn't been for the circumstances he would not have agreed to show Caroline at the Exhibition! I was not surprised by his comment, but confess I was a bit miffed and thought the man very rude to say so. I decided then and there that I would submit an entry and hopefully have it accepted on its own merit the following summer.

It was around about this time that I was rung up by Swartz and Sackin Fine Arts Gallery. Mr Sackin told me that he rented space on the third floor of Harrods in the antique furniture department. He then told me that his assistant, Joanna Harding, had been to the Chelsea Flower Show and had seen my children sculptures on the Crowther stand. He asked if I would be interested in showing some of my sculptures in his gallery if they were cast in bronze. I told him that I thought that sounded a good idea and agreed to meet him and Joanna and discuss what would be possible.

When we met the three of us got on very well and I agreed to show a bronze on a 'sale or return' basis, sharing the profit 50/50 after casting costs had been deducted. It was a good deal for them, but also for me as being in Harrods was a step up the market ladder for the sculptures. I lent them the bronze sculpture of Mark as a child and Joanna made up a catalogue of children sculptures to show to prospective clients. Included in the catalogue were the photographs of *The Acrobats* so at least now the public could see the sculpture. Meanwhile I had my first real commission to attend to down in Devon, *Mr Banbury*.

I had of course been disappointed that my godmother, Angela, had not wanted to keep *The Acrobats*, however, one day she rang and said that her husband, Kit, would like to commission me to do a sculpture of their gamekeeper, as he was about to retire. They wanted to put the finished sculpture in the woods where they buried their Labrador gundogs! I immediately agreed to do the job as it sounded fun.

Margie and I were asked for the weekend so I could meet Mr Banbury, take photographs and measure the old man. Mr Banbury was less than five feet tall, a little wizened gnome of a man with a wicked twinkle in his eye and everyone loved him. When we went to see him he was dressed in gaiters and plus fours, woodcock feather in his hat and a tall fork stick in his hand, just as though he was about to go out on a pheasant shoot. He was magnificent and I couldn't wait to sculpt him.

Mr Banbury was soon completed and with my usual trepidation I asked Kit and Angela to come down to Marwood and have a look. They arrived one beautiful sunny day in an enormous Bentley and I walked them over to the barn and stripped the plastic off *their gamekeeper*. Luckily they were overjoyed and couldn't wait to get him into the woods.



'Mr Banbury' in clay

The film *West Side Story* was playing in the local Barnstaple cinema. I have always loved Bernstein's music, so to get over my usual depression that followed the completion of a sculpture I decided to go into town and see the afternoon show. Margie had to collect the boys from school, but agreed to drop me off if I could find my own way home.

We set off in the little NSU car with me driving. As we crested the rise out of our village I saw a large car bearing down on us right in the middle of the road where two small cars could barely pass. The driver was looking at a map that the passenger was holding up. I slammed my foot down on the brake but it was impossible to stop and *wham*, they drove right into us. What a terrible noise a car crash makes! In those days seat belts had not been invented so Margie shot forward and crashed her head on the window and her knee on the dashboard, while the shock of the impact went straight up my right leg into my hip socket. The doors had sprung open so we were able to get out of the car without any trouble, but the poor NSU was a complete wreck.

The other people were fine as they were in a heavier car. Margie sat on the grass verge dazed from the bump on her head while I was hopping around on one leg with a lot of pain in my right hip. Luckily there was a telephone kiosk a few yards down the road and someone had rung for the police. An ambulance soon arrived and we were driven to the hospital with both of us strapped to stretchers. On arrival we were taken to the x-ray department, Margie for the bump on her head and me for my hip.

The next thing I knew was a doctor telling me that I had fractured the socket in my right pelvis and that I would have to spend six weeks in traction. Margie was diagnosed with concussion and would have to spend a night in hospital for observation. It was as though the whole world had crashed in on us both. One moment happy and free, the next imprisoned. It was almost impossible to believe. A hole was drilled through my leg bone below the knee and a steel rod screwed through it. Margie was wheeled away to a women's ward and me to a men's one. Ropes and pulleys were arranged and a weight added to the end to stretch my leg away from the fractured hip socket. I was trapped and felt as though I was in one of Roy's plaster moulds!

The news of the crash spread and our friends the Spinks immediately stepped in and collected the boys from school and took them to Marwood. Sally, the mother of Melanie the little girl who had modelled *Story Time*, gave the boys tea when they got home and then spent the night in our house to look after them. Jimmy Smart rang my mother in London who said that she would be down on the first train the following day to help. The nurses told me that Margie was sleeping well and advised me to have a knockout pill, as it would help get over the shock.

Waking up the following morning in a 30-bed ward was the most depressing thing that has ever happened to me. I still could not believe what had taken place, and all so quickly. I was very depressed until a nurse came and told me that Margie had woken up was feeling fine. I have never been more relieved in my life.

The arrival of my mother in the afternoon was a complete surprise. She had been to see Margie and reassured me that she was all right. She was appalled by the hospital, which was not surprising as it was about to be pulled down. My mother immediately took charge and booked two rooms in the Imperial Hotel saying that she wouldn't allow Margie to stay in a place as awful as the Infirmary a moment longer! There was nothing to be done about me as

unfortunately I was tied to a ton of lead hanging off the end of my bed. When Margie was ready to leave she came to reassure me that she was fine apart from a bad headache and a whopping bruise on her knee. She also pointed out things could have been a lot worse! That thought cheered me up, but watching her leave the ward reduced me to tears. It was not a good day.

Luckily we had two cars by then so she was still able to carry on with school runs and every day she came to see me in the hospital. If it hadn't been for these visits I would have gone raving mad. Being 38, in traction and trapped in a bed flat on your back was absolute hell because of the utter boredom. Although surrounded by 29 other ill men I felt as though I was in solitary confinement, but at the same time chained to a galley oar. It was a very sobering situation. Margie kept me supplied with books to fill the hours, but you can only do so much reading. As each day dragged by one after another my situation seemed increasingly like a prison sentence and ever since those days I have felt profoundly sorry for anyone confined and admired them for their courage and stoicism.

The nurses were always jolly and caring and without their constant bustling around as they went about their duties the days would have seemed even longer. My respect for the nursing profession has been unbounded since then. The worst time was during the long hours of night when I couldn't sleep and was unable to read. It is during the night that the black fears come to haunt you. What made these dark hours bearable was one particular nurse who seemed to be on nearly every night. She would make her inspection on the hour and when she came past my bed would always check if I was awake. Usually I was and so she would stop and have a whispered conversation with me. She was about my age and had just been through a messy divorce. She lived in a tiny caravan parked in a farmer's field way out of town so that she could be on her own during the day. I have forgotten her name but I can still see her in my mind's eye as clear as though it was yesterday. When she had to leave me to go about her other duties she used to kiss my forehead and tell me to go to sleep, which I immediately used to do. She was about to leave the hospital and move to Southampton and remarry. I hope that everything worked out for her and she has a wonderful life. She deserved it for she was a true Nightingale.

The other thing that kept me going was the memory of the Yogananda Self-Realisation course that I had done when on the farm. If you remember I had become very interested in Yogananda's teachings and had my Third Eye opened in a rather weird ceremony! One of the things that Self-Realisation had taught me was to exercise my body mentally without actually moving a muscle. What you do is think of a particular muscle, say your right biceps, and then mentally flex it. The muscle doesn't move but you can feel the nerves tingling in the muscle. I was able to go right through my whole body from toe to scalp flexing the nerves without actually moving. I used to do the exercises two or three times a day and also if I woke during the night. The whole process took about an hour so it helped fill the time as well as do me a lot of good both mentally and physically.

One of the books Margie brought in for me to read was a slim volume of Pushkin poems. I found his poems enchanting and incredibly wise. The little book included a very brief history of his exile in Paris. It was this exile that provided the inspiration for one of his poems that I came to love and read time and time again. It is based on the Russian Orthodox Church Easter

tradition where the youngest daughter of the household releases a caged bird after the service. The verses captivated me and go as follows:

The Bird

From home an exile, still preserving
The custom of a bygone day,
The Festival of Spring observing,
A captive bird I loose away.

Consoled at one with Nature living
How could I now to God complain
Who gave to me the joy of giving
Its freedom to this bird again.

I knew that the first thing I would do when I got out of hospital was try and capture the poem in a sculpture. Some months later when I was back in the attic again for the winter, I sculpted the *Bird of Spring*. We had met an army couple called Tim and Dinny Green when they were having their summer holidays in our village. We became great friends and I asked them if I could use the hands of their eight-year-old daughter, Della, as a model.



Bird of Spring

After four weeks in hospital I was going berserk. All semblance of pain had long since disappeared and I was beginning to feel like a convict with a ball and chain attached to my ankle. I had Margie ask a farmer friend of ours if he would come and visit me, as I had thought of a plan of escape. When he kindly came I asked him if he would build a frame with lengths of the same shelving steel that I used for armatures over a single bed at Marwood on which I could suspend a weight. I planned to attach the weighted cord to an eye screwed into the heel of a shoe. I had done a sketch of the frame and he agreed to do it. I then consulted the doctor and much to my relief he agreed to my leaving as long as I stayed in bed for another two weeks, so I discharged myself.

As soon as the frame was completed I was carried out to an ambulance and driven back to Marwood. Oh what joy to be home! It was wonderful when the boys arrived from school and came to see me. That evening Margie cooked a welcome-home meal for us to have on my bed. What an evening and what bliss to be out of that awful ward. However, there was a problem. The idea of having the weight attached to my shoe didn't work as I woke up in agony feeling as though my foot was going to snap off at the ankle. I sat up, undid the laces and got rid of the shoe, which never went on again except when the doctor came.

I couldn't wait to get back to sculpting so Margie brought me some plasticine in bed and I modelled a pair of otter cubs at play. When I had been incarcerated I had read Williamson's book *Tarka the Otter* that is set on the River Taw, which runs through Barnstaple.



Otter Cubs

The doctor finally agreed for me to get up as long as I remained on crutches for another six weeks. He also suggested that it would be very good for me to go bicycling, as this would exercise my legs. Margie borrowed a bike and I rode around and around the circular drive for an hour every morning and again in the afternoon. I am not sure what the neighbours thought but it didn't

matter, I was up and mobile again. Margie's mother had suggested that I put a rose behind my ear and quote poetry to really get the locals talking. Freedom!



Two hours of bicycling every day!

My main concern while I was incarcerated had been about *Mr Banbury*. I had rung Roy before the accident and he said he would be down in a couple of days to take the mould. My mother had booked him into the Imperial Hotel and after work he would have dinner with her. Later Roy told me how after the meal they would go to the bar and sip green Chartreuse and tell yarns. When he had finished he somehow got the mould in the trailer on his own and took it back to London.

Sitting in a car also didn't put weight on my hip so when I got a call from Roy telling me he had finished the sculpture I immediately set off to London to inspect it. One day while I had been lying flat on my back in hospital Margie had come in with a message from Roy saying something awful had happened when he was chipping out *Mr Banbury* from the plaster mould. Somehow or other he seemed to have knocked off a little finger from his left hand! He had been through all the rubbish twice and had not been able to find it. Would I be able to model a new little finger?

I think that caused my one moment of amusement in the hospital. I was able to tell Margie that she could tell Roy not to worry because there was not a problem. The finger wasn't in the rubbish because it didn't exist! He had lost it in a shooting accident many years previously. I arrived at the garage and found *Mr Banbury* looking absolutely magnificent, missing finger and all. We loaded him into Roy's station wagon and drove down to Fosbury in convoy for an

unveiling. Angela and Kit were delighted with the sculpture and with the aid of a couple of gardeners and a little tractor we moved *Mr Banbury* into the woods so he would stand guard over the graves of the gundogs for ever.



*'Mr Banbury the Gamekeeper'
standing guard at the gun dogs' cemetery*

The following day Angela and Kit took the real Mr Banbury to see his statue and they told me that he had burst into tears and that his dogs had jumped up on the sculpture to have a good look. Gundogs are not meant to

jump up, but there was apparently something about the sculpture that broke all the rules. It is probably the best compliment I have ever had!

Many stories in life have sad endings and Mr Banbury's statue is one of them. Aunt Angela died and Kit was lonely in the big house, so he decided to move and give it to one of her sons. One weekend Kit visited the house and in the evening walked up to see *Mr Banbury*, but found that he had disappeared. Thinking that it had been stolen he returned to the house to raise the alarm. His stepson then told him that they had not liked the sculpture so they had stored it in a shed. Kit was furious and immediately had it put into his car and drove away. He had decided to end his days by living in a small bungalow with his butler in a Yorkshire village near where he had been born. *Mr Banbury* was placed in the middle of the lawn and as far as I know he is still there.

On our first Christmas at Marwood we asked my old nanny, Nana, to come and stay so she could get to know our three boys. Obviously her caring for me for the first eight years of my life had played an enormous part in her life as a woman. To now laugh and play with my children must have made her feel like a grandmother. It was wonderful that this happened when it did as the following year she developed cancer and died soon afterwards. What a remarkable woman and what an amazing life she had led! She and her sister were born in a Glasgow slum and orphaned as children. She had looked after me and my two brothers, travelled to Australia during the war, and on her return become a matron at a preparatory school. She always had a smile on her face and never said an unkind word.



***'Nana' having Christmas at Marwood
with Margie, my mother and Peter***

The one thing I did a lot while in hospital was *think*. Firstly, lying on my back I gave thanks that I hadn't been crippled in the accident. I also now knew that all I wanted to do in life was to be a sculptor. I had had some success and had proved that I could earn my bread and butter as an artist. This was exceedingly lucky as the people who had bought the farm had gone bankrupt and I had found the farm back on my hands, worth half of its former value. None of that seemed to matter as I now had a wonderful life and a new income. Our main

problem was that Jimmy wanted to sell Marwood Hill and we had to move. This was not a bad thing because it again forced us to face the problem of finding a suitable school for the boys. It also had become abundantly clear that North Devon was too far from London and my clients. We needed to move nearer the capital, the foundries and Roy.

The first thing was to find a school that would take the three boys. On my trips up and down to London I had often passed the gates of Hazlegrove Preparatory School, so I decided to call in and take a look. The school had a long drive up to it through a park that reminded me of my days at Sandroyd. The main building was a converted stately home, but when I met the headmaster, Paddy Heazell, I knew immediately that he was nothing like Sandroyd's Mr Ozane. Luckily he agreed to take three young Australians as day-boys, there being no beds available, which suited us. Over the following years Paddy and his wife, Julyan, became our very good friends.

The next thing was to find a house not too far away from the school, so I set about looking around the district. Margie had once seen a beautiful thatched house on our way up to London and had said, "Wouldn't it be fun to live in a house like that." I made enquiries in all the towns and villages around Hazlegrove. I found forty possibilities and set off for a three-day tour of inspection. On the first day I had found nothing that I liked and the following day I again drew a blank, so began to feel worried. Many of the houses didn't even look like the photographs in the brochures, while others were beside a main road or a railway track. Towards the end of the third day I still had found nothing and began to think I was on a Mission Impossible. The last house on my list before heading for home was in the village of Galhampton and had only just come onto the market the previous day.

I turned off the main road into Long Street and took a right into Middle Street and thought how mundane after all the quaint names in Devon. Middle Street did change to March Lane, which sounded a lot better! The address I had was for a thatched cottage behind a large green box hedge opposite a red telephone box. I found an open gate and drove in. I was so enchanted with what I saw I made up my mind to buy the house before I had stepped out of the car! The cottage was to the right and opposite was a barn. Could this be real I thought, it's all too perfect! What was it like inside?

Major Thurston greeted me and showed me around the house. I liked everything I saw, even down to the colour of the walls, which were all painted off-white. We wouldn't have to change a single thing. It was perfect.

"Could I see the barn please?" One end of the barn had been an old cider press and the other a pair of horseboxes. It had an upstairs floor that had been an apple store. It was incredible, even better than my barn at Marwood. We stepped outside and shook hands. He had a buyer and we had a home.

I think I probably floated all the way home as I couldn't wait to tell Margie all about Agecroft. I had told the Thurstons that I would bring my wife to see the house the next day but not to worry, I knew she would love it as much as I did. I assured him that we had a firm deal and nothing would change my mind about the purchase. I would telephone my lawyer in the morning and asked him to do the same straightaway. To hell with surveyors, if the house had just been refurbished, it must be all right.

I was right about Margie loving the house as much as I did. Agecroft had the same magic as our home on the farm in Australia, something that I have never found anywhere else in the world. It almost seemed that the house had

been waiting for us and over the last 35 years it has become our best friend. Coming back to Agecroft from a trip is like crawling into a warm comfortable bed after a hard day's work.

When everything was signed and sealed and the Thurstons had gone, we brought the boys to Agecroft for a camping weekend to show them the house and introduce them to their new school. They were as excited as we were and couldn't wait for the big day, January 1st 1972. We had been at Marwood for three years and what wonderful years they had been! Now it was as though we were setting out on yet another journey, but in our own home and at the start of a new life. On top of all that I had a new gallery in Harrods. Could life get any better?

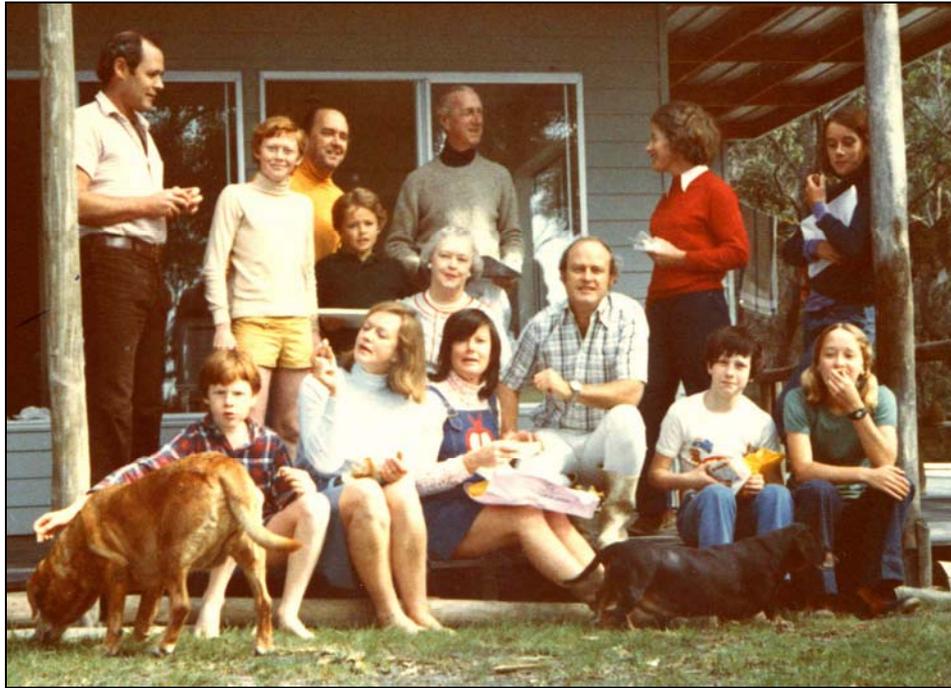


'Agecroft' on my first visit

The news of our purchase of Agecroft must have been a disappointment to Margie's parents, but their letters remained full of encouragement plus they had a plan. Would we all come out as their guests for a holiday at their new beach cottage called Araganui on the wild coast of NSW.

We arrived in Melbourne and drove straight down to Portsea. Pop Begg had hired a car for us so that we would be independent. The boys of course remembered Portsea from our summer holidays spent on the beach. It still amazes me that Margie and I had both grown up on the cliff only a few houses apart. We had become engaged here and walked Shelly Beach together. It was breathtaking to be back standing on the same sands again.

We had heard so much about Araganui in their letters we couldn't wait to see it. A long day's drive across Gippsland and through the Rain Forests got us there on time, but only to find that the dirt track through the wild bush was flooded and impassable. Margie's brother turned up in a jeep and we bumped through the bush to the bungalow that overlooked the beach. As the cottage only had two bedrooms and there were ten of us, Pop had hired a caravan for the overflow of children. So began an enchanted holiday and family reunion for us all Down Under.



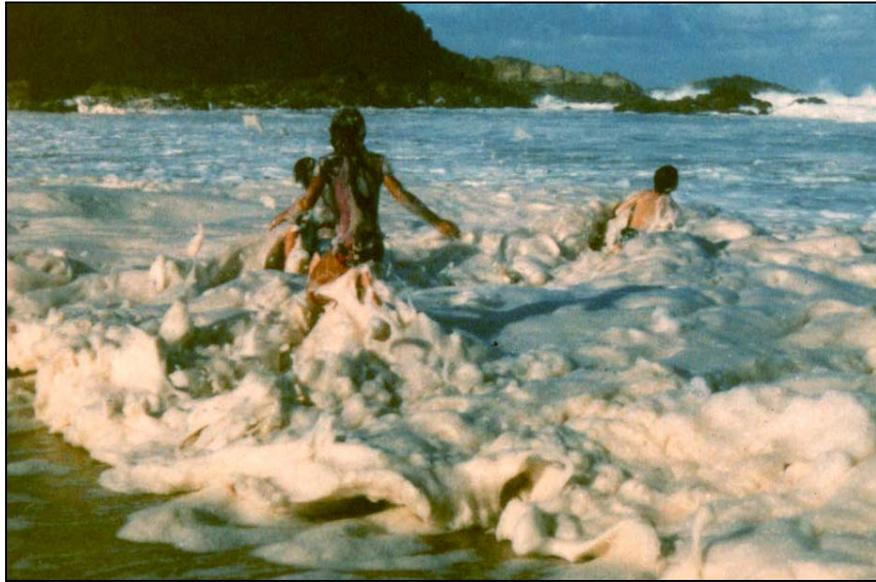
'Araganui', Easter 1972
John – Tim – David – Andrew – Pop – Mitzi – Kate
Heido – Mark – Margie – Helen – Judy – Michael – Peter – Caroline

The sun shone and dried the track out, but the stream that usually just trickled across the beach was still in flood and had washed away tons of sand.



Peter – Kate – Mark – Caroline – Tim – Andrew
Young sculptors at work

In the morning we fed the goannas on fresh eggs and in the evening we played Charades. During the day the children played on the sand and as the sea was warm and the beach was covered with spume it provided the perfect material for mock battles between cousins. What a holiday!



Cousins fighting in the spume

All good things come to an end and I was dying to get back to my new studio at Agecroft. It was time to say goodbye to Margie's parents and Australia and start work on the *Leapfrog Children*. We all helped tidy up the cottage and then sent the cousins down to the beach to dig a very deep hole in the sand and bury the organic rubbish. They came back giggling and asked us to come down for the Burial Service.



Burial Service followed by Prayers

I never saw Pop or Helen again, but I remember them both as two of the kindest and most warm-hearted people I have ever had the privilege to know and I shall always be grateful for the way they supported my new career.