

# HALF TIME

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# HALF TIME

## - RACHEL -

In the grand story of my life, you are the most enchanting chapter,  
the sweetest verse, and the enduring melody.

Your love has painted the pages of our journey with colours of  
passion, strength, and boundless joy.

With this book, I dedicate these tales of our shared adventures to the  
person who has filled my life with love's warmest light.



## - PROLOGUE -

On his 45th birthday, Shem Banbury reflects on the journey of his life thus far, with a sense of anticipation for what lies ahead.

Titled "Half Time," Shem's biography encapsulates the adventures, challenges, and growth experienced during the first half of his remarkable life. It serves as a reflection on the moments that shaped him, the relationships that enriched his journey, and the lessons learned along the way.

With a touch of humour, Shem acknowledges the statistical average life expectancy in New Zealand is currently 82 years, projecting himself as slightly 'above average' this statistically means he should make it to 90 - a testament to his optimistic outlook and zest for life.

In this biography, Shem's story unfolds through his various passions, from his athletic pursuits in triathlons, duathlons, and sports like cricket and golf, to his dedication as an educator, leader, and creator of Kiwi Kids News. It delves into the cherished moments spent with his beloved family—his wife Rachel and their children, Asa, Eli, and Milli—along with the unforgettable experiences shared with friends and colleagues.

"Half Time" is a celebration of a life well-lived, a testament to the power of resilience, determination, and embracing new challenges. It invites readers to join Shem on his remarkable journey of a man who embraces each passing moment with a grateful heart and an unwavering commitment to make the most of the time he has been given.

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## - GENESIS -

Let's face it, pondering the rendezvous that led to your existence is not exactly the most delightful mental image. We'd much rather keep our parents' bedroom antics safely tucked away in the realm of mystery. But hey, comedy gold is often born from awkward moments, and it's from this deeply intimate dance that Shem's extraordinary journey through life begins.

It is a story that delves into the lives of his parents, Ross and Diane Banbury, and the remarkable journey that led to Shem's existence.

Ross Banbury, a skilled builder hailing from the town of Hamilton, New Zealand, was a man of strong values. With unwavering honesty and a devout Christian faith, he embodied principles of integrity and righteousness. A teetotaler, Ross found solace in the simplicity of life and possessed a deep love for sports, particularly Canterbury rugby. His passion for the game ran deep, instilling in him a sense of camaraderie and a keen appreciation for the triumphs and challenges of competition.

Meanwhile, Diane Banbury, a humble housewife, played her role in the story of Shem's life. In her everyday life, she worked as a social worker, serving others before herself. Though her role may have seemed small in the grand scheme of things, she approached her work with dedication and a warm, welcoming demeanour.

This is the start of the story of Shem Luke Banbury. A life that started with a race of microscopic proportions that saw the tender union of a determined sperm and a receptive egg. In this race, where countless potential lives vie for the chance to be, Shem emerged victorious, claiming the ultimate prize—the opportunity to embark on a remarkable journey of existence. However, this journey was not an easy one.

For a sperm to reach the egg cell and achieve fertilization, it must overcome countless obstacles in a treacherous and convoluted path. The journey can take anywhere from thirty minutes to several hours, as the sperm must navigate through hostile environments and brave turbulent currents. Fertilization itself requires a multitude of motile spermatozoa, for only one of them can successfully breach all barriers and accomplish the sacred union with the egg. Shem's first race was no different.

And so, it was within the elaborate choreographed dance between Ross and Diane that set the foundation for Shem's life. Their young love, the warm Blenheim evening, and their desire to bring forth new life set in motion a sequence of events that would ultimately lead to the conception of Shem. As their individual stories intertwined, the stage was set for a captivating journey filled with love, growth, and the discovery of purpose.





Shem Banbury, a man with a vibrant spirit and a story to tell, was born on December 31st in the picturesque town of Blenheim, New Zealand in 1978.

His birth in Blenheim's Wairau Hospital marked the beginning of a life filled with unexpected connections and intriguing twists of fate. Little did he know at the time Mark Coster, his future wife's cousin, was born just one day after him on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1979, in the same hospital.

During the period when Shem was born, it was customary for women to remain in the hospital for about a week following childbirth. This meant that Shem's mother and Mark's mother were likely present in the hospital at the same time, possibly even sharing the same ward.

The striking resemblance between Shem and Mark, which has sparked numerous questions, is an interesting coincidence. It's not uncommon for people to bear a resemblance to others, especially when they come from the same region or share certain genetic traits. The fact that Shem and Mark have a similar appearance has raised curiosity and speculation among those who are aware of their birth dates.

While this similarity in appearance may pique interest and invite speculation, it's important to remember that physical resemblance alone does not necessarily imply a direct familial connection. Sometimes, these intriguing coincidences remain mysterious, adding an air of wonder to the tapestry of human connections and the unpredictable nature of life's pathways. Whether or not Shem and Mark are related beyond their coincidental birth dates is a question that can only be answered by delving deeper into their respective family histories and genealogical records. Nonetheless, their shared resemblance serves as a fascinating reminder of the interconnectedness of our lives and the delightful mysteries that can unfold within them. Moving on quickly, Shem's journey begins with fond memories from his early years, shaped by family, education, and the simple joys of childhood. Let's delve

deeper into each part of Shem's life to uncover the remarkable experiences that shaped him into the person he is today.

R.G. 3a

NEW ZEALAND

N<sup>o</sup> 387484

**CERTIFICATE OF DATE OF BIRTH**

*I certify that, according to the record of the birth in my office,*  
SHEM LUKE BANBURY *was born*

*on* THIRTY-FIRST DECEMBER 1978

*at* BLENHEIM

*E. A. Dwyer*  
(Deputy) Registrar of Births and Deaths.

Dated at BLENHEIM this 13<sup>TH</sup> day of APRIL 19 84

FEE <del>\$1.00</del> \$3.00	CAUTION—Any person who (1) falsifies any of the particulars on this certificate or (2) uses it as true, knowing it to be false, is liable to prosecution under the Crimes Act 1961.
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Shem's parents, Diane Banbury and Ross Banbury, played a pivotal role in his upbringing. His father, originally a talented builder, made a life-changing decision to become a youth worker, showcasing his dedication to helping others. During their time in Blenheim, Shem's father worked as a builder and then for Youth for Christ, a nonprofit organization focused on supporting and guiding young people. This commitment left a lasting impression on Shem, instilling in him the values of service, empathy, and the desire to make a difference in the lives of others.

Shem's earliest memories take him back to the vibrant atmosphere of Redwood Kindergarten. In those formative years, he discovered the joy of learning and socializing with other children. The kindergarten became a

place where his imagination soared, and he developed a thirst for knowledge. Through engaging activities and caring teachers, Shem's curiosity was nurtured, setting the foundation for his lifelong love of learning.

After the enlightening sessions at Redwood Kindergarten, a delightful tradition would unfold. Shem and his mother would head to the shops, where he eagerly awaited the opportunity to indulge in 20-cent ice blocks, a delightful treat to cap off his day. These simple moments created cherished memories, serving as a reminder of the joy that can be found in life's small pleasures.

Diane Banbury (nee Knight), born on July 5, 1956, is a remarkable individual with a passion for social work and a nurturing spirit. Her life journey has taken her to various places, each contributing to her rich experiences and personal growth.

Diane's educational journey began at Freeville Primary School, where she laid the foundation for her academic pursuits. She then continued her studies at Christchurch Girl's High School, where she thrived in a supportive and intellectually stimulating environment.

Although Diane embarked on her professional career after completing high school, her thirst for knowledge persisted. Later in life, she pursued higher education at both the University of Canterbury and Massey University, ultimately obtaining a Bachelor of Social Work degree. This accomplishment not only reflects her dedication and perseverance but also showcases her commitment to making a positive impact on the lives of others.



Throughout her life, Diane has lived in several locations, each offering unique experiences and opportunities. She initially resided in Christchurch before moving to Blenheim. From there, she embarked on a journey to Nelson, immersing herself in the vibrant community and enriching her understanding of diverse cultures and perspectives. Diane later returned to Christchurch, embracing the familiarity and reconnecting with cherished memories. However, her adventurous spirit led her back to Blenheim before ultimately settling in Te Puke, where she discovered a new sense of belonging.

On September 6, 1975, Diane Knight exchanged vows with Ross Banbury, embarking on a lifelong partnership filled with love, support, and shared dreams. Together, they have forged a bond that has withstood the test of time, celebrating the joys and overcoming the challenges that life has presented.

Diane's adventurous spirit extends beyond her physical travels, as she finds solace and inspiration in her favourite destinations—Paris and Bali. These places hold a special place in her heart, perhaps due to the vibrant cultures, stunning landscapes, or the sense of freedom and self-discovery they offer.

Known for her servant's heart, Diane dedicates her time to uplifting and empowering others. She actively engages with individuals, working alongside them to develop and enhance their lives. Whether it is providing guidance, support, or lending a listening ear, Diane's compassionate nature shines through, making a profound difference in the lives she touches.

In addition to her dedication to social work, Diane finds joy in gathering loved ones around the dinner table, creating warm and welcoming moments filled with laughter, shared stories, and delicious meals. Her passion for gardening is another expression of her nurturing spirit, as she lovingly tends to her plants, creating a serene and beautiful sanctuary.

Diane Banbury is an exceptional woman who has devoted her life to making a difference in the lives of others. Her journey has been characterized by a thirst for knowledge, a spirit of adventure, and a heart brimming with love and compassion. Through her work, her relationships, and her passions, Diane continues to leave an indelible mark on the world around her.

Ross Banbury, born on 10th July 1955 in Hamilton, has been an unwavering presence throughout my life, guiding and shaping me in profound ways. His journey began when our family moved to Tokoroa in 1957, and then to Christchurch in 1961, where his roots took hold.

In those early years, Ross lived with our aunt in Waltham before finally finding a place to call our own on Hume Street in Waltham. Ross started his education at Waltham School from 1961 to 1968, laying the foundation for his academic pursuits. He then attended Christchurch Boys High School from 1969 to 1973, where he persevered and achieved University Entrance on his second attempt, a testament to his determination and resilience.

During his formative years, Ross found solace and guidance in his faith, embracing Christianity in 1966 at Opawa Baptist Church. He became an active member of the church's youth group and attended religious services with unwavering commitment. However, he wasn't immune to the occasional mischievousness of youth. In 1970, he and three other boys were kicked out of a Boys Brigade Camp for their unruly behaviour, a reminder that even the most steadfast individuals have moments of youthful exuberance.

Sports played a significant role in Ross' life, with cricket, rugby, and basketball taking centre stage. Unfortunately, a couple of broken collarbones within a year led him to switch to soccer, joining the church team and participating in Saturday competitions. As he entered adulthood, Ross pursued his passion for carpentry, starting a carpentry apprenticeship in 1974 and obtaining his Advanced Trade Certificate in Carpentry, solidifying his skills in a trade that would serve him well.

In September 1975, Ross took another significant step in his journey by marrying Diane, embarking on a lifelong partnership that has brought love, joy, and strength to our family. As he navigated the challenges of work and family life, Ross' commitment to making a positive impact on the lives of young people remained steadfast. He devoted countless hours volunteering for Youth For Christ Campus Life Clubs, serving as a leader and mentor to many.

In 1976, the family relocated to Blenheim, where he continued his involvement with Youth For Christ, establishing and running the YFC Campus Life Club for three years. His dedication to nurturing the potential

of young minds extended beyond his role as a carpenter, leaving an indelible mark on the community and shaping the lives of countless individuals.



Over the years, Ross' career path shifted, leading him to various roles and opportunities. He worked as a carpenter until 1984 when he transitioned to working for YFC full-time. In 1988, he moved to Nelson, where Dad took on the responsibility of directing the YFC work, leaving an enduring impact on the lives of young people in the region. In 1995, our journey brought him back to Christchurch, where Dad assumed the role of Community Youth Worker for the Youth Alive Trust in New Brighton, further expanding his reach and influence.

Throughout his journey, Ross continued to pursue personal and spiritual growth. He enrolled in Bible College courses at NZBC (now Laidlaw College), deepening his understanding of faith and ministry. In 2010, we relocated to Blenheim once again, where he became the Pastor of Oasis Family Church, leading and shepherding a congregation with unwavering devotion. In mid-2018, a new chapter beckoned, and Ross embraced the opportunity to serve as the Pastor of Te Puke Baptist Church, further enriching his pastoral journey.

The young Shem Banbury embarked on a daily journey to Riverlands School, pedalling his bicycle from their house on 183 Scott Street. This daily adventure fostered a sense of independence and exploration, as he discovered the world beyond his immediate surroundings. As Shem progressed from standard 1 to standard 3, Riverlands School became a place of growth and discovery. Alongside his academic pursuits, he found joy in playing sports. Football, in particular, captured his heart.

Fond memories arise from the after-school football sessions with his father, where they bonded over friendly competition and a shared love for the game. These moments not only strengthened their father-son relationship but also instilled in Shem the values of teamwork, dedication, and perseverance. Furthermore, Shem actively participated in his local football club, honing his skills and cultivating a deep passion for the sport that would stay with him throughout his life.



Shem's childhood home was a place of warmth, laughter, and cherished memories. The towering willow tree that graced the front yard became an invitation for young Shem to explore its branches and immerse himself in its leafy canopy. This tree served as a sanctuary, offering him a sense of adventure and a place to retreat from the world below, providing moments of solitude and reflection. A small room on the second floor housed a pool table, creating a haven for friendly competitions and leisurely evenings spent with family and friends. This room became a gathering place, filled with laughter and friendly banter, where memories were forged, and bonds were strengthened. The early years of Shem Banbury's life in Blenheim laid the groundwork for the remarkable individual he would become. The nurturing environment provided by his loving parents, Diane and Ross Banbury, cultivated his curiosity and thirst for knowledge. From the cherished memories of Redwood Kindergarten to the adventures of biking to Riverlands School and engaging in sports with his father, each experience shaped his perspective on life.

As we continue through the pages of Shem Banbury's biography, we will witness the unfolding of his educational journey, career accomplishments, personal passions, and the deep connections he forged within his community.

The Banbury family, after residing in Blenheim, relocated to Nelson, New Zealand. They settled at 62A Tipahi Street, which was situated next to the Broads playing field. This location likely provided convenient access to outdoor recreational activities and open spaces.

Shem attended Hampden Street School during his time in Nelson. As part of his daily routine, he walked to school, emphasizing his commitment to education and his active lifestyle. Hampden Street School is a well-known primary school in Nelson, renowned for its quality education and nurturing environment.

Shem's first adventure to the hospital, as fate would have it, took place in Nelson. It was a day like any other, and Shem was on the football field, ready to show off his header skills. Little did he know, a peculiar quirk of his would soon lead him to an unexpected rendezvous with the medical world. You see, Shem had this endearing habit of sticking out his tongue just a tad when he was in deep concentration. It was a subtle, almost subconscious move that he never really noticed himself doing. But on this particular day, it proved to be a game-changer, and not in the way you'd expect. As Shem leaped to head the ball, his tongue made its appearance, poking out just slightly. In a cruel twist of fate, a fellow player's kick landed squarely on his jaw. The result? A near miss at biting off his own tongue! It was a painful, memorable lesson about the unpredictability of life, even in the midst of a simple football game.



During Shem's time in Nelson, he found joy in traveling to Christchurch to watch cricket matches at Lancaster Park, often accompanied by his dad Ross. These trips not only offered an opportunity to indulge in their shared love for the sport but also allowed them to spend time with their grandparents, Gowan and Bam Banbury.

Gowan Bruce Banbury led a vibrant and remarkable life, filled with artistic expression, a love for the outdoors, and a passion for gardening. Gowan, with her vibrant artistic spirit, left a lasting impact through her creative endeavours and her love for tramping. She found solace in nature, often embarking on tramping adventures with her grandson, Shem, in the picturesque landscapes of the Port Hills.

Gowan's artistic talents were widely recognized and admired. Her artwork illuminated the canvas and paper, bringing forth a world of colour, emotion, and beauty. Her creations not only enriched the lives of her loved ones but also left an artistic legacy that would be cherished for generations to come.

From being a young boy Albert Banbury (Bam) had a deep love for boating and yachting, embarked on a tumultuous journey through life filled with remarkable twists and turns. Adopted as a child, he faced the heartbreak of his adoptive parents' marriage falling apart. This led to a series of events that saw him being kidnapped, only to be taken in by a caring aunt in Auckland, New Zealand, who already had a large family of her own.

Bam's tumultuous upbringing took yet another unexpected turn when he was kidnapped by his stepmother, leading him to find himself entangled in a court battle. As a result, he spent time in a child's home, further adding to the challenges he had to endure. Despite these hardships, Bam's indomitable spirit pushed him forward.

Leaving school at the tender age of 13, Bam ventured into the workforce to support his family. He took up a job at a local grocer, earning a meagre wage

of 5 shillings a week. Demonstrating a strong sense of responsibility, he diligently contributed a portion of his earnings to his mother.

During the darkness and uncertainty of World War II, fate brought together the two souls at Godley Head, overlooking the entrance to Lyttleton Harbour in New Zealand. Gowan Bruce and Bam Banbury found themselves huddled together during a blackout in 1942, among the nearly 3,000 individuals stationed along the eastern Port Hills, prepared for a potential Japanese invasion.

Their paths converged during that critical moment, and their bond grew stronger over time. Despite the hardships and challenges of war, Gowan and Bam found solace and love in each other's presence. In 1944, they exchanged vows and embarked on a journey that would span decades, leaving an indelible mark on their family and the generations to come.



The story of Gowan and Bam is one of resilience, devotion, and the enduring spirit of love. Bam, known as Albert Banbury, joined the Royal New Zealand Navy after being rejected by the army. With his background as an accomplished yachtsman, he embarked on his naval career aboard HMNZS Philomel in March 1941. Leaving New Zealand in July 1941, he served in the Eastern Fleet, initially on the cruiser HMS Cornwall and later the patrol duty vessel Pingo-Wo, a former Hong Kong ferry.

Amidst the perils of war and the fall of Singapore, Bam's journey continued to Batavia (now Jakarta), where he played a vital role in towing the Australian destroyer HMAS Vendetta, whose engines were inoperative, to safety in Australia. His resilience and determination led him to Melbourne, where he hitched an unofficial lift back to New Zealand on the armed merchant cruiser HMNZS Monowai. However, upon his return, he discovered he had been reported missing, mistakenly labelled as a deserter during his time in Australia.



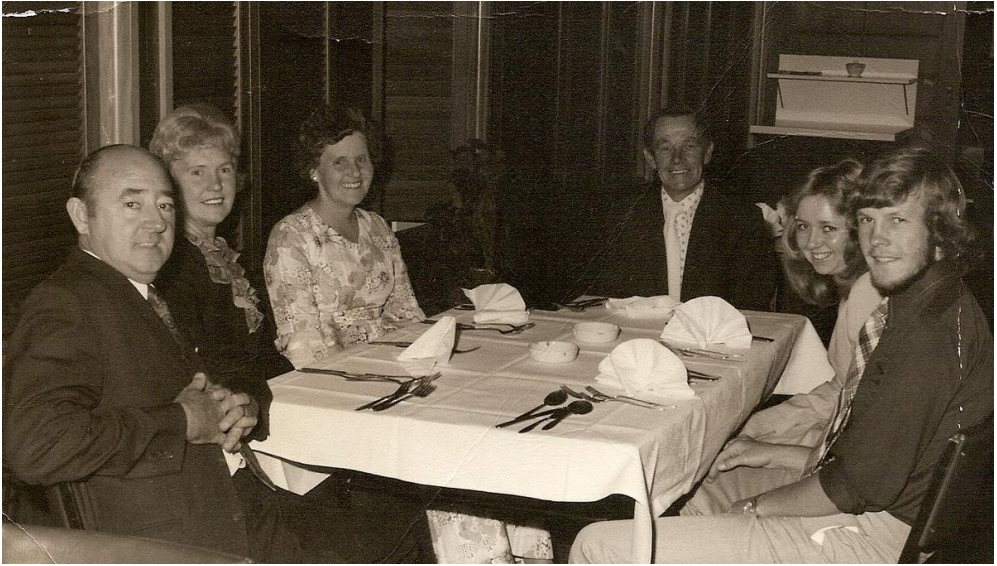
Meanwhile, Gowan diligently served her country, working with radar systems at Godley Head. She vividly recalled a harrowing incident when the radar shack, perched on the cliff edge, was toppled by a fierce Canterbury nor-wester. Thankfully, Gowan and her comrades escaped unharmed, their lives spared by the shack's fortunate sideways fall onto land rather than into the treacherous rocks below. The camaraderie among the servicewomen and the sense of community at Godley Head left a lasting impression on Gowan, forming lifelong friendships.

During the chaos and uncertainty, love blossomed between Gowan and Bam. Their engagement became official, and they were married on September 12, 1944, shortly after Bam's return from Fiji. In her memoir, Gowan reflected on the whirlwind nature of their courtship, acknowledging the unpredictability of the times and the need to seize happiness whenever possible.

As the war ended, Gowan bid farewell to her military service in 1944, while Bam was discharged from the navy in April 1946. Their love endured beyond the confines of war, becoming a steadfast pillar in their lives. Gowan's memoir captured the profound connection they shared, the memories of sitting around campfires at Godley Head, and the small group of radar operators who became their extended family.

The Banbury household at 17 Hume Street became a hub for family and friends, where cricket matches were more than just games. Bam's enthusiasm and bowling skills were legendary within the family, and the backyard served as the hallowed ground for countless matches.

The towering trees that hung over the bowling end of the driveway posed a unique challenge, but Bam adapted his bowling technique with a slight round-arm action. His determination and adaptability allowed him to deliver the perfect ball, bending it to his will.



Backyard cricket at 17 Hume Street was not just about the game itself. It was a celebration of togetherness, where laughter, friendly rivalry, and the spirit of competition filled the air. After the matches, the family would gather in the warmth of their home, sharing drinks and stories of memorable moments on the pitch, strengthening bonds of friendship and creating lasting memories.

During the holiday season, Gowan became known for her unique Christmas gift-giving traditions. The anticipation among her grandchildren, Shem, Josiah, and Amos, grew each year as they wondered who would receive the most unusual present. Gowan's unconventional gifts became legendary within the family, adding laughter, joy, and cherished memories to their Christmas celebrations.

Shem's educational journey began at Riverlands School in Blenheim, where he took his first steps into the world of learning. This primary school

provided the foundation for his academic and social development, nurturing his curiosity and love for knowledge.

Here is an image of Shem's first school class. Although it may resemble a Gloriavale family portrait, with Pastor Goodlove and Deacon Faithfulservant, this period marked a significant phase of growth and personal development for Shem and his classmates.







After a period of time, Shem's family relocated to Nelson, and he continued his education at Hampden St School. This transition brought new experiences and opportunities as Shem adapted to a different learning environment.

Hampden St School provided a supportive and engaging atmosphere, fostering his growth and encouraging him to explore his interests and talents.

During his time at these primary schools, Shem encountered dedicated teachers who played a significant role in shaping his educational journey. Their guidance and encouragement helped instil a love for learning and provided a solid academic foundation that would serve him well in the years to come.

Through his early education at Riverlands School in Blenheim and Hampden St School in Nelson, Shem not only gained knowledge and skills but also developed important social and interpersonal skills. These formative years laid the groundwork for his future academic achievements and personal growth.

One of the highlights of Shem's experience at Nelson Intermediate was his enjoyment of sports. Engaging in physical activities likely allowed him to develop his physical fitness, teamwork skills, and sportsmanship. Whether participating in organized team sports or engaging in physical education classes, Shem found pleasure in the realm of sports during his time at the school.

Shem also appreciated his classroom experiences at Nelson Intermediate. He had the privilege of being taught by Mr. Wiseman and Mr. Mann, who likely played influential roles in shaping his educational journey. These teachers may have provided guidance, knowledge, and support as Shem progressed academically.



In addition to his academic pursuits, Shem's leadership qualities were recognized when he was selected as Deputy Head Boy during his time in Form 2. This appointment indicates his maturity, responsibility, and ability to inspire and lead his peers.

After his time at Nelson Intermediate, Shem Banbury continued his education at Nelson College. Despite the exact details of how he made it into the accelerated program not being provided, it is evident that Shem's academic abilities were recognized, and he was able to pursue an accelerated curriculum at the college.

Although Shem enjoyed his time at school, his true passion lay in sports. He actively represented Nelson College in various sporting activities, particularly cricket and soccer. In his first year at school, Shem had the privilege of playing in the first XI cricket team, which is a notable accomplishment for a freshman. This demonstrates his skill, dedication, and potential in the sport.



PUPIL'S NAME Shem Banbury

ROOM 20 FORM 1 YEAR 90

**LANGUAGE** The ability to express ideas in written and oral form with increasing clarity, accuracy and fluency. The skill to use appropriate language in a variety of situations, to be able to write neatly and legibly and to be able to spell those words in common usage, learn new words and have a spelling conscience.

Shems Narratives and Poetry exhibit an accurate choice of vocabulary and his next step is to increase fluency by using conjunctions. He is a confident speaker in both formal and informal situations. Work is presented in a neat link-Print hand.

**READING** The ability to obtain meaning from what is read and to react to it. To become increasingly independent, and to use reading for enjoyment, and the gathering and processing of information.

A confident, wide ranging reader who can select appropriate material from the text and make value judgements. He can locate and classify information in a newspaper. A confident oral reader who uses attack skills to overcome difficulties.

**MATHEMATICS** The knowledge and understanding of mathematical facts, processes and principles and to use mathematics with accuracy and increasing skill. The ability to solve problems and use maths in everyday situations.

He has shown understanding of concepts and skills in most areas. Large number addition and multiplication skills are as yet inconsistent in application. He can recall his basic facts confidently and accurately.

**SOCIAL STUDIES** The ability to learn about people, past and present and to understand aspects of their way of life in comparison with our own. The use of research skills.

Shem has ably shown he can learn about people in the past using research skills. He has demonstrated a wide general knowledge of W3 geography and can make mature contributions to oral discussions.

**SCIENCE** The ability to explore, explain, understand, and appreciate aspects of our environment, use apparatus effectively and use research skills.

He has demonstrated an understanding of a single plant habitat as well as gain knowledge of mans impact on the environment.



Some of the highlights of Shem's sporting career during his time at Nelson College include scoring his first century in a Sunday representative game, a significant milestone in cricket where a batsman reaches 100 runs individually. This achievement likely brought him great pride and recognition among his peers and coaches. Additionally, Shem's talent in both cricket and soccer earned him selection for various representative teams, showcasing his abilities at a higher level and furthering his development as an athlete.

Following the family's time on Tipahi Street, they moved to 17b Brunner Street, which was situated on the side of the Grampians mountains. This new location likely provided beautiful scenic views and opportunities for outdoor exploration and recreation, thanks to its proximity to the mountains.

Overall, Shem Banbury's time at Nelson College was marked by his enthusiasm for sports and his involvement in representative teams. These

experiences allowed him to showcase his talents and further his growth as an athlete.

After completing his 5th form year, the Banbury family relocated to Christchurch, with Ross Banbury securing a youth pastor position at Seaview Christian Centre. As a result, Shem Banbury enrolled at Shirley Boys High School in Christchurch for his further education.



The Banbury family settled at 481 Mairehau Rd, a location that held significance due to its proximity to the Queen Elizabeth II Stadium. This stadium gained prominence as the host site for the 1974 Commonwealth Games, an international multi-sport event. Living in such proximity to this notable venue would have provided the Banbury family with a sense of pride and a unique connection to sporting history.

It's worth mentioning that Shem's transition to Shirley Boys High School in Christchurch would have presented him with new academic and social opportunities. Attending a different school in a new city often brings about

new experiences, friendships, and challenges, contributing to personal growth and development.



One of Shem's biding memories from Mairehau Road was the long games of cricket with his brothers Josiah and Amos.

Josiah Banbury, an exceptional individual with a compassionate heart and a relentless drive to make a positive impact, was born on March 31, 1981, in the picturesque town of Blenheim. From an early age, it was clear that Josiah possessed a unique blend of empathy and determination that would shape his life's journey.

During his formative years, Josiah attended Shirley Boys, a prestigious educational institution known for its commitment to academic excellence and holistic development. It was here that he honed his intellectual abilities and developed a deep sense of social responsibility. His experiences at Shirley Boys laid the foundation for his future endeavours, setting him on a path of learning and personal growth.



Following his secondary education, Josiah embarked on an enriching academic journey at the University of Canterbury, beginning in 2009 and concluding in 2015. During his time at the university, Josiah immersed himself in the study of social work, drawn to the field by his unwavering desire to advocate for those in need. His dedication and commitment to his studies earned him a reputation as a diligent and compassionate student, inspiring his peers and professors alike.

Driven by his innate desire to make a difference, Josiah's journey took him to various corners of the world. In his pursuit of knowledge and cultural understanding, he resided in Christchurch during his early years, immersing himself in the vibrant community and gaining firsthand insights into the challenges faced by individuals and families.

In 2005, Josiah embarked on an adventure to Laos, a captivating country renowned for its rich cultural heritage and breathtaking landscapes. The experience left an indelible mark on his heart, fuelling his determination to tackle issues of housing and social inequality.

Josiah's insatiable thirst for knowledge and exploration led him to Ireland from 2005 to 2007, where he further expanded his horizons and deepened his understanding of global social issues. His time in Ireland provided invaluable insights into diverse communities and offered him a broader perspective on the challenges faced by vulnerable populations.

In 2008, Josiah found himself in Glasgow, Scotland, a city steeped in history and renowned for its vibrant spirit. Here, he immersed himself in the local culture, forging meaningful connections with individuals from all walks of life. This experience not only enriched his understanding of social dynamics but also reaffirmed his commitment to addressing the underlying issues that contribute to homelessness and inadequate housing.



On January 18th, 2020, Josiah embarked on a new chapter of his life, joining hands in marriage with Josephine, a kindred spirit who shared his passion for social justice and advocacy. Together, they embarked on a journey of love and support, amplifying their impact on the world around them.

Currently employed by Housing New Zealand, Josiah has dedicated his professional career to social work, specializing in housing. His role allows him to address the critical needs of individuals and families, ensuring they have access to safe and secure housing. Josiah's unwavering dedication, coupled with his empathetic nature, has earned him the respect and admiration of his colleagues and the community he serves.

Beyond his professional pursuits, Josiah remains an ardent supporter of Arsenal Football Club, demonstrating his unwavering loyalty and passion for

the sport. However, it is his exceptional character and unwavering commitment to social justice that truly define him. Josiah possesses a remarkable ability to see the potential in every individual and strives to uplift and empower those who face adversity. His willingness to go the extra mile and champion the underdog reflects his genuine desire to make the world a better place.

Amos, Shem's younger brother, was born in Blenheim on January 2nd, 1983, and from a young age, it was evident that he possessed an infectious love for people. Alongside his passion for connecting with others, Amos also had a deep love for soccer. This passion took him on an exciting journey when he had the opportunity to travel on a soccer tour of Europe during his college years, where he not only experienced the thrill of the game but also had the chance to explore different cultures and create lasting memories.

Growing up, Amos had a primary aim—to engage with as many people as possible and gather the most entertaining stories in preparation for his 21st birthday celebration. However, his pursuit of memorable experiences led to a couple of amusing incidents. One unforgettable moment occurred when he lent his ID card to a friend, resulting in a mix-up that led others to believe he had jumped off a five-story car park building in the middle of the night. The mistaken identity caused quite a scare for Ross and Diane, who received a distressing call and rushed to the hospital, only to discover that Amos was safe and sound. The mix-up was eventually resolved when Amos called in the morning, suggesting a casual breakfast outing, much to the relief of his concerned parents.

Another incident involved an ambitious U-turn that left Amos with his car precariously perched on a road island. As he attempted the manoeuvre, he realized too late that the height of the road island exceeded the clearance of his car's wheels, resulting in a temporary predicament. Despite these occasional misadventures, Amos approached life with a light-hearted spirit, always finding humour in the unexpected twists and turns along the way.



In his professional life, Amos has thrived as a successful businessman. He runs a finance company, offering financial services and solutions to

individuals and businesses. Additionally, he manages a local sports bar, creating a vibrant and welcoming atmosphere for patrons to gather and enjoy their favourite sports events. Amos's entrepreneurial endeavours also extend to a motorcycle store, catering to the needs and passions of motorcycle enthusiasts.

Currently, Amos is a dedicated businessman, fully immersed in the world of wheeling and dealing. With a keen eye for investments, he is always on the lookout for opportunities to maximize returns and grow his ventures. Amos puts in long hours, driven by his passion for building and developing businesses. Not only does he focus on the financial aspect, but he also places great importance on taking care of his employees, ensuring they are well looked after and fostering a positive work environment. His commitment and dedication to his business endeavours have earned him a reputation as a hardworking and responsible businessman.

During his time at Shirley Boys High School, Shem Banbury had some eventful experiences and made notable friendships. Two of his close friends were Tim Edmonds and Marcus Jamieson, who played a significant role in shaping his high school years.

Tim Edmonds stood out for his adventurous and slightly reckless nature. His daring act of driving his car into the Avon River to impress the girls from the local girls' school demonstrated his penchant for seeking attention and taking risks. While his actions might have been seen as bold or outrageous, they also added a sense of excitement and spontaneity to their circle of friends.

Both Shem Banbury and Tim Edmonds were selected as Shirley Boys High Youth Ambassadors to the Youth City Council. This role was meant to represent the school and facilitate events or initiatives within the youth community. However, it seems that Tim's focus was more on collecting the phone numbers of the girls on the committee, rather than organizing and

running events. As a result, the duo failed to execute any successful events during their tenure.

Although their time as Youth Ambassadors may not have been particularly fruitful in terms of event planning, the experiences and interactions they had likely provided valuable life lessons and memories. Friendships and shared adventures often create lasting bonds and contribute to personal growth and development during the high school years.

During his high school years at Shirley Boys, Shem formed a close bond with a fellow student named Marcus Jamieson. Marcus was not only a reliable friend but also a talented basketball player, captivating the court with his skills and love for the game. However, Marcus had another passion that fuelled his enthusiasm outside of school - cars.

With his deep knowledge and passion for automobiles, Marcus found the perfect job as a delivery boy for Pizza Hut. This allowed him to combine his love for driving with his keen interest in cars. Whenever they had free time, Marcus would eagerly share his automotive wisdom with Shem, teaching him the essentials of car maintenance, including oil changes and general upkeep. Under Marcus' guidance, Shem learned valuable skills that would serve him well throughout his life as a responsible car owner.

As the weekends rolled around, Shem's social circle expanded to include Tim, another close friend of Marcus. The trio often found themselves spending Saturday evenings together, engaging in various activities that solidified their friendship. Whether it was exploring new hangout spots, catching a basketball game, or simply enjoying each other's company, these moments became cherished memories etched in Shem's mind.



Their friendship was built on a foundation of trust, shared interests, and laughter. Marcus's passion for cars and Tim's easy-going nature brought a dynamic element to their group, creating an environment where they could freely express themselves and forge lifelong connections. Through their shared experiences, they navigated the highs and lows of their high school years, supporting and uplifting one another along the way.

As time went on, the friendship between Shem, Marcus, and Tim grew stronger, intertwining their lives in a way that only true friends can. They laughed, learned, and navigated the challenges of adolescence together, creating a bond that would endure beyond their time at Shirley Boys. The lessons taught by Marcus, both on and off the basketball court, left an indelible mark on Shem's life, shaping his understanding of loyalty, camaraderie, and the importance of pursuing one's passions.

Looking back on those formative years, Shem cherished the memories made with Marcus and Tim. Their friendship was a constant source of support, joy, and shared experiences that enriched their high school journey. Their Saturday evening escapades served as a reminder of the power of friendship and the lasting impact that genuine connections can have on one's life.

Shem Banbury's passion for sports continued to thrive during his time at Shirley Boys High School. He excelled in cricket and football, representing his school and achieving notable milestones.

In cricket, Shem's skills as an opening batsman and gully fieldsman made him an asset to the 1st XI Cricket team. He had the privilege of captaining the team in his final year and led them on two tours of Australia, showcasing his leadership abilities. The team achieved considerable success, reaching the South Island final and the semi-finals of the Gillette Cup. Although they fell short of reaching the ultimate goal, their consistent performances and strong presence in the competitions were a testament to their talent and dedication.





leadership role as captain of the cricket team and his selection for representative sides indicate his ability to excel in a team environment. These experiences undoubtedly contributed to his personal and athletic development, shaping his character and love for sports as he moved forward in his journey.

As Shem reached the end of his 7th form year, a significant moment of spiritual significance awaited him. Raised in a Baptist household, he made a profound decision to solidify his faith through baptism. Seeking a meaningful and personal experience, Shem chose to be fully immersed in the water, symbolizing a complete surrender and dedication to his beliefs.

The backdrop for this momentous occasion was the family swimming pool at Mairehau Rd, where loved ones gathered to witness this significant step in Shem's spiritual journey. With conviction in his heart and a deep understanding of his own faith, he embraced the opportunity to demonstrate his commitment through the act of immersion.

In making this decision, Shem held a personal conviction that the Catholic practice of sprinkling water, often used in baptism, did not capture the significance he sought. Similarly, he considered the Jewish ceremony of circumcision to be an extreme practice for this event. Instead, he chose a path that resonated with his own beliefs and understanding, allowing him to forge a deeper connection to his faith and spirituality.

The baptism in the family swimming pool marked a pivotal moment in Shem's life—an affirmation of his beliefs, a testament to his personal journey, and an expression of his unwavering commitment to his Baptist upbringing. It was a deeply personal and meaningful choice that reflected his desire to fully embrace and honour his faith.

## -EXODUS -

For the next stage in his life, Shem embarked on a gap year in the United Kingdom. Beginning with a three-day visit to Oxford University. It was during this time that he met Paul Ferries, another gappie who would become a close friend and companion throughout their gap year adventures.

Their gap year placement led them to Brymore College, an all-boys farming school located in Somerset. The days as gap students were eventful and sometimes challenging, largely due to the eccentric house master, Mr. Spriggins. Known for his spirited demeanour, Mr. Spriggins often expressed his expectations with loud exhortations and demands, which created a unique atmosphere at the school. Shem and Paul resided in the school's mess hall and took on the responsibility of looking after the students during the weekends.

During weekdays, Shem divided his time between various tasks. He assisted in classes, worked on the farm, and dedicated hours to gardening. After school, he took on the responsibility of coaching and managing sports teams, including rugby, athletics, and hockey. This involvement allowed Shem to develop his leadership skills and foster a sense of camaraderie among the students.

During their time at Brymore, Shem and Paul found themselves caught up in a memorable incident involving a student named Michael. One morning, while attending the staff briefing, the principal addressed the departure of a student named Michael, citing bullying as the reason for his leaving the school. Shem and Paul exchanged glances, realizing they knew exactly who this boy was.



Immediately after the staff meeting, Shem and Paul made their way to the common room, eager to learn more about Michael's departure. They casually asked their fellow students, "Hey, who is this boy called Michael that has left?" To their surprise, one of their peers responded with a teasing remark, "Oh, it's the one you boys call potato head!"

Shem and Paul couldn't help but chuckle at the nickname that had been bestowed upon Michael, although they were aware that bullying was a serious matter that should not be taken lightly. Reflecting on the incident, they realized the importance of treating their fellow students with respect and kindness, understanding that even seemingly harmless nicknames can contribute to a negative and hurtful environment.

This experience served as a reminder to Shem and Paul about the impact their words and actions can have on others, and they made a conscious effort to promote inclusivity and empathy within their interactions at Brymore. They

understood that everyone deserved to be treated with dignity and compassion, regardless of their physical appearance or any other distinguishing features.

One memorable experience during his gap year was a captivating tour of Scotland, a journey that would forever be etched in Shem's heart. As the Easter holidays approached, Shem joined a group of adventurous fellow gap students, ready to embark on a remarkable adventure across the picturesque Scottish landscape.



Their first stop was the enchanting city of Edinburgh, where history and culture seamlessly intertwined. The group marveled at the grandeur of Edinburgh Castle, perched high atop Castle Rock, and immersed themselves in the city's vibrant atmosphere along the iconic Royal Mile. From the

haunting tales of Mary King's Close to the lively street performers on the bustling Princes Street, Edinburgh embraced them with its unique charm.

Leaving the bustling city behind, Shem and his companions ventured further into the Scottish Highlands, eager to explore the mythical allure of Loch Ness. As they journeyed along winding roads that hugged the majestic mountains, their eyes feasted upon breathtaking vistas of rugged landscapes and serene lochs. Upon reaching the shores of Loch Ness, they couldn't help but be captivated by the mystique surrounding the legendary creature said to dwell within its depths.

Their tour of Scotland was not merely limited to the popular tourist destinations, for Shem and his fellow travellers sought a deeper connection with the land and its people. They chose to stay at youth hostels, embracing the communal spirit and camaraderie that accompanied such accommodations. Each hostel provided a unique experience, fostering new friendships and offering opportunities to connect with fellow travellers from around the world.

Amidst their adventures, Shem and his companions discovered the warmth and hospitality of the Scottish people. Whether it was sharing stories around a cozy fireplace, engaging in lively discussions in local pubs, or receiving warm smiles from the locals they encountered along the way, the sense of community and genuine kindness left an indelible impression.

Throughout their journey, the group revelled in the raw beauty of Scotland's landscapes. From the majestic peaks of the Highlands to the picturesque valleys dotted with charming villages, every twist and turn of their bus ride revealed a new vista to marvel at. It was a sensory feast, where the lush greenery, cascading waterfalls, and rugged cliffs painted a tapestry of natural wonders.

As the tour of Scotland ended, Shem couldn't help but reflect on the transformative power of travel. The trip had not only exposed him to the

breathhtaking beauty of Scotland but had also opened his eyes to the diversity of the world and the shared humanity that unites us all. The memories forged during that journey would forever hold a special place in his heart, reminding him of the power of exploration, connection, and the boundless wonders that await those who dare to venture beyond their comfort zones. Shem found great enjoyment in playing table tennis during his time at Brymore. The nightly games provided a welcome outlet for friendly competition and a chance to hone his skills. Little did he know that his dedication to the sport would lead him to the South Wales Open.

As the tournament approached, Shem took the time to carefully select his attire, opting for a sleek black singlet and matching black shorts. Filled with anticipation, he entered the competition, ready to test his abilities against other skilled players. However, fate had a surprise in store for him.

His opponent turned out to be a professional Chinese player who had recently arrived in the UK. With formidable skills and experience on his side, the match proved to be a challenging one for Shem. Despite his best efforts, he found himself outmatched by his opponent's exceptional talent. It was a humbling experience, but one that served to highlight the level of skill and dedication displayed by professional players.

Although Shem may not have emerged victorious from that encounter, the experience taught him valuable lessons about sportsmanship, perseverance, and the importance of continuous improvement. It fuelled his determination to further enhance his table tennis skills and seek new opportunities to compete in the future.





Another significant event was a school trip to Northern France, where Shem visited the site of the Northern Landings. This excursion offered a poignant reminder of the historical events that shaped the region and allowed Shem to gain a deeper understanding of the sacrifices made during wartime.

During the summer holidays, Shem embarked on a transformative journey to Greece, a land steeped in rich history and captivating mythology. With a sense of excitement and curiosity, he set off on a six-week adventure that would leave an indelible mark on his life.

Upon arrival in Athens, Shem was warmly welcomed by American missionaries who graciously opened their doors and hearts to him. He felt a deep sense of gratitude for their hospitality and was eager to make the most of his time in this ancient city. With their guidance, he embarked on a cultural exploration that allowed him to witness the timeless beauty and significance of the Greek capital.

As fortune would have it, Shem's visit coincided with the World Athletics Championships, adding an extra layer of excitement to his already remarkable journey. Attending the event, he found himself captivated by the extraordinary performances of world-class athletes. Among them, Beatrice Faumuina's awe-inspiring prowess in the discus throw left him in awe as she claimed the coveted gold medal. Equally mesmerizing was Haile Gebrselassie's unparalleled determination and endurance as he emerged victorious in the highly competitive 10,000-meter race. Witnessing these incredible displays of athleticism, Shem's admiration for the dedication and skill of these athletes grew exponentially.

Between attending the athletics championships and exploring the vibrant streets of Athens, Shem also found time to venture to Marathon, a historic site brimming with significance. Standing on the same ground where the legendary Battle of Marathon took place, he couldn't help but feel a deep connection to the past. The weight of history enveloped him as he retraced

the footsteps of the ancient Greek soldiers who valiantly fought in the face of adversity.

Throughout his time in Greece, Shem marveled at the fusion of ancient ruins and modern-day life, allowing him to witness the enduring legacy of Greek civilization. From the iconic Acropolis to the bustling markets of Plaka, he immersed himself in the rich tapestry of Greek culture, savouring traditional cuisine, engaging in lively conversations, and forging friendships that would endure beyond his time in Athens.

The experience in Greece broadened Shem's horizons, instilling in him a deep appreciation for the interconnectedness of cultures and the enduring power of sport. It was a journey that left an indelible mark on his soul, reminding him of the beauty and resilience of humanity, and inspiring him to approach life with a renewed sense of wonder and curiosity. In his final holiday before returning home, Shem spent a week in London, soaking up the sights and sounds of the bustling metropolis. The city's rich history, iconic landmarks, and diverse cultural offerings left a lasting impression on him.

The gap year experience proved transformative for Shem, allowing him to grow personally and broaden his horizons. The daily Chad's Hill run, a challenging 6km route, became part of his routine, contributing to his physical fitness and enhancing his running abilities.

Shem's gap year was a significant milestone in his journey, shaping his character and preparing him for the next phase of life's adventures. It was a time of self-discovery, exploration, and personal growth, leaving a lasting impact on his outlook and aspirations.

## -LEVITICUS -

After returning from his gap year, Shem embarked on a new chapter of his life by pursuing a career in teaching. This path required four years of dedicated study, which he began at the Christchurch College of Education and Canterbury University. For the first two years, Shem divided his time between these two institutions, gaining valuable knowledge and practical skills in the field of education.

During his third year of study, Shem focused exclusively on his studies at the University. This allowed him to delve deeper into his chosen subjects and further develop his expertise. Shem's academic pursuits centred around education papers and history. He displayed a particular interest in New Zealand history, studying the nation's rich and diverse past. Additionally, he explored topics such as the Black Death, a pivotal event in world history, and the architectural history of early New Zealand houses.

Throughout his years of study, Shem remained an active member of the Seaview Christian Centre Youth group. He not only participated in various activities but also held a leadership role within the group. This involvement encompassed organizing and attending camps, engaging in Bible studies, and actively participating in church services. Shem's commitment to his faith and his desire to contribute to his community were evident through his dedicated involvement in the youth group.

Regarding accommodation during his studies, Shem experienced different living arrangements. In his first year, he opted to live at home, enjoying the comforts and support of his family while focusing on his studies. However, in his second year, he sought a taste of independence by sharing a residence with two friends, Roly and Steven, at 10 Tancred Street. This living arrangement provided a sense of camaraderie and the opportunity for shared experiences and personal growth.

In his final two years of study, Shem resided in a townhouse alongside Jared Buchanan and Craig Forster. This living situation fostered a sense of community and collaboration among the housemates as they navigated their academic and personal journeys together.

Shem's years of teacher training not only equipped him with the necessary skills and knowledge for his future profession but also provided him with a broader understanding of education and its significance. His specialized studies in education and history laid a solid foundation for his future endeavours in the classroom.

Simultaneously, his active involvement in the Seaview Christian Centre Youth group served as a source of spiritual growth, leadership development, and connection with a community of like-minded individuals.

Shem's time as a student teacher was marked by academic achievements, personal growth, and a strong sense of community. It prepared him for the challenges and rewards that awaited him in his future career as an educator, shaping his values, teaching philosophy, and commitment to making a positive impact on the lives of his future students.

During his university days, Shem found himself in need of reliable transportation, and an opportunity arose that seemed almost serendipitous. Through a family friend who worked at Turners, Shem was able to acquire a car that had a unique history—a 1978 Yellow Corolla that had been previously owned by someone who had passed away. Undeterred by its past, Shem saw the potential in the vehicle and immediately developed a deep affection for it.

Dubbing the car, the "CM" (short for Chick Magnet), Shem embraced its quirks and character. While it lacked a functional radio and required some unconventional manoeuvres to keep it running smoothly, the 1978 Yellow Corolla became a symbol of freedom and adventure for Shem during his university years in Christchurch.

Shem's ingenuity and sense of humour were evident in the modifications he made to the car. He installed a powerful foghorn that could be heard echoing through the streets of Christchurch, adding a touch of whimsy to his daily commutes. Additionally, he cleverly adjusted the direction of the window spray nozzles, allowing him to playfully surprise unsuspecting pedestrians at traffic lights.

One notable modification was the decision to cut off two inches of the exhaust pipe, giving the car a distinctive sound that turned heads wherever it went. Recognizing the significance of this change, Shem sought to commemorate it with a touch of symbolism. He arranged for a close Jewish friend to perform a light-hearted "circumcision ceremony," adding a humorous twist to the car's unique journey.

Through its idiosyncrasies and memorable experiences, the 1978 Yellow Corolla became an integral part of Shem's university life. It carried him through countless adventures, serving as a steadfast companion on road trips, spontaneous outings, and memorable nights out with friends.

While the car may have lacked some modern conveniences and its fair share of mechanical challenges, Shem's connection to the 1978 Yellow Corolla was not solely based on its practicality or performance. It represented a time of youthful exuberance, camaraderie, and the embrace of life's humorous moments.

The memories created and the laughter shared during those university years with the CM remain etched in Shem's heart. The 1978 Yellow Corolla holds a special place in his autobiography, serving as a symbol of his resourcefulness, creativity, and ability to find joy and meaning in the most unexpected places.

While pursuing his education at the university, Shem Banbury embraced various job opportunities that allowed him to gain valuable experience and contribute to different fields. One of his early employment ventures was working at Cartwright and Son, his uncle's bookbinding business. As part of

his responsibilities, Shem was tasked with weekend cleaning duties, ensuring that the office, toilets, and main areas were kept tidy and presentable. Additionally, during holidays, he had the opportunity to work on the floor, assisting in the process of binding numerous books. This hands-on experience not only provided him with practical skills but also instilled a strong work ethic and attention to detail.



Shem's time at Cartwright and Son book binders, proved to be a memorable and eventful experience. The workplace was a melting pot of diverse personalities, each adding their unique flair to the mix. One of the notable characters was Jason, the grumpy folder operator, whose perpetually sour disposition added a touch of eccentricity to the team.

Among the crew, there was Keiran, a young bogan known for his love of cars and his penchant for spending his entire weekly earnings on his prized vehicle. He could often be found cruising up and down Columbo Street, showing off his latest modifications. The presence of Shem, Josiah, and Amos,

affectionately known as the Banbury boys, working together in the factory added an extra layer of camaraderie and mischief to the daily routines.

Among the banter and humorous exchanges, an intriguing rumour circulated within the trio. It was whispered that their colleague, Paul, possessed a third nipple. Amos claimed to have caught a glimpse of this alleged anomaly, though the veracity of his sighting remained unverified and shrouded in mystery.

The lively atmosphere and diverse cast of characters at Cartwright and Son book binders made for an entertaining and unforgettable chapter in Shem's university journey. The interactions, humorous situations, and occasional rumours added a touch of levity and camaraderie to the workplace, creating lasting memories for all involved.

Shem's first foray into the world of flatting brought him to the vibrant and bustling number 10 Tancred St, located in central Christchurch. Joined by his adventurous companions, Steve McKenzie and Roly Hay, Shem embarked on a journey of independence and shared experiences.

As they settled into their new abode, the flat became a hub of laughter, camaraderie, and, of course, a fair share of mischievous antics. The trio quickly discovered that living away from home came with its own set of challenges and responsibilities. From mastering the art of budgeting and grocery shopping to navigating the intricacies of household chores, they faced a steep learning curve together.

One memorable aspect of the flatting experience was the unique initiation ritual that awaited anyone seeking entry into their humble abode. Steve's trusty BB gun became the gatekeeper, ensuring that only the brave and resilient would join their ranks. Friends and family members visiting the flat were playfully subjected to this entertaining tradition, as they dodged the playful BB pellets and laughter filled the air.

The quirks of the Tancred St toilet added an extra layer of intrigue to their daily routines. With a door reminiscent of those found at campgrounds, missing its top and bottom, the bathroom provided an open invitation for pranks and surprises. The mischievous trio found great delight in ambushing each other with well-aimed shots from the BBgun or unexpected sprays from water pistols, turning mundane bathroom visits into moments of laughter and surprise.

Steve's culinary skills, or lack thereof, added an extra layer of amusement to the flattering experience. It became evident that the fine arts of cooking and baking had eluded him, leaving his flatmates in awe of his unconventional culinary adventures.

One fateful day, Shem and the others returned home to the mouthwatering aroma of cooked chicken. Excitement filled the air as they anticipated a delicious meal. However, their enthusiasm quickly turned to bewilderment as they discovered Steve's unique cooking method. Unbeknownst to them, Steve had decided to cook the chicken in the microwave for a whopping 90 minutes.

While cooking chicken for an extended period may not be entirely unheard of, doing so in the microwave raised eyebrows and generated laughter among the flatmates. The chicken, though undoubtedly well-done, showcased Steve's unorthodox approach to culinary endeavours. It served as a memorable reminder of his culinary misadventures and became a story that would be retold with laughter for years to come.

Despite Steve's culinary quirks, the flatmates embraced the mishaps and created an environment where laughter and camaraderie thrived. They learned to appreciate the moments of shared meals, regardless of the outcome, and found humour in the unexpected surprises that came from living with an aspiring microwave chef.



These culinary escapades not only added to the tapestry of their flattering experience but also served as a reminder of the bonds forged through laughter, resilience, and the joy of shared experiences. In the years that followed, the tale of Steve's well-done microwaved chicken would continue to bring smiles and laughter to those who were fortunate enough to hear it, embodying the spirit of friendship and light-heartedness that defined their time at number 10 Tancred St.



During his university years, Shem found himself unwittingly embarking on a short-lived modelling venture. It all began innocently enough as he strolled to a lecture, when suddenly, someone approached him with an intriguing proposition. They expressed the need for a model and proclaimed that Shem

was the perfect fit for their project. Flattered by the unexpected compliment, Shem eagerly agreed, envisioning a glamorous and exciting experience.

Little did he know that the reality would be quite different. When Shem arrived at the event later that night, it quickly became apparent that his role as a model was solely based on one distinctive attribute—his hair. The organizers explained that it was a challenge to find individuals with long hair, and Shem's luscious locks had caught their attention.

To his surprise, Shem discovered that his hair would be the centrepiece of the fashion showcase. The organizers informed him that curls were out of vogue, and a straight, bob-like hairstyle was now in fashion. Embracing the unexpected turn of events, Shem found himself undergoing a hair transformation reminiscent of the Beatles' iconic style.

With his freshly styled hair, Shem took to the runway, participating in three fashion shows that showcased his new look. Although his modelling career was short-lived, the experience brought unexpected perks. The boys at Tancred Street, where Shem resided, enjoyed the fruits of his modelling endeavours, as free pizza was the payment.

The open fire at Tancred St became not only a source of warmth and coziness but also a catalyst for unforgettable adventures and misadventures. The three flatmates, Shem, Steve, and Roly, devoted a long summer day to collecting firewood, ensuring they would be well-prepared for the coming winter. Little did they know that this day of labour would lead to one of their most memorable fire-related incidents.

On a particular evening, as they gathered around the roaring fire, Roly inadvertently made a fateful mistake. In his enthusiasm to contribute to the wood supply, he mistakenly used the plastic recycling box to transport the firewood into the house. Unaware of the consequences that would soon unfold, they basked in the warmth of the fire, oblivious to the plastic box's ill-fated proximity to the intense heat.

As the fire blazed higher and hotter, an unexpected turn of events unfolded. The intense heat caused the nearby plastic recycling box to succumb to the flames, melting into the carpet below. The aroma of melted plastic filled the air, mingling with the crackling fire, creating a sensory reminder of their momentary oversight.

While the incident resulted in a damaged carpet and a loss of their bond, the flatmates couldn't help but find humour in the situation. The melted plastic became a tangible reminder of their shared experiences and the mishaps that dotted their flatting journey. It joined the ranks of the countless BBgun marks on the walls and the broken light bulbs, serving as a testament to the spirited adventures and occasional mayhem that filled their time at Tancred St.

Although the trio may not have received their full bond back, the memories and stories forged in that house were far more valuable. They served as lasting reminders of their bond as friends and the laughter-filled moments that would forever be etched in their collective memory. The open fire at Tancred St had truly become a central character in their flatting escapades, leaving a legacy of mishaps, laughter, and unforgettable experiences.

Through the shared adventures and laughter that filled the walls of their Tancred St flat, Shem, Steve, and Roly formed an unbreakable bond. It was a time of growth, self-discovery, and lifelong memories, where the challenges of flatting were met with resilience and a sense of humour. These experiences laid the foundation for lasting friendships and provided Shem with tales to be retold and cherished for years to come.

In his final year of university, Shem landed a job with Attitude New Zealand, a program affiliated with the Parent Place organization. This position was particularly meaningful as it allowed him to make a positive impact on young individuals' lives. As one of the first South Island presenters of the Attitude program, Shem was responsible for delivering health and sexuality education presentations to students in schools.



As part of his role, Shem would visit different schools and engage with students in both classroom settings and larger assemblies. He addressed topics such as relationships, communication, consent, and other important aspects of adolescent health. Through these presentations, Shem aimed to promote understanding, empathy, and informed decision-making among the students.

Being a presenter for Attitude New Zealand required excellent communication skills, sensitivity, and the ability to connect with young people. Shem approached his role with dedication, ensuring that he delivered the information in a relatable and engaging manner, fostering an environment of open dialogue and understanding. By sharing his knowledge and experiences, he aimed to empower students to make informed choices and navigate the challenges they may face.

Working for Attitude New Zealand provided Shem with the opportunity to combine his passion for education, youth development, and public speaking. It allowed him to contribute to the well-being and holistic growth of young individuals, fostering positive attitudes and healthy behaviours.

In Shem's final year at university, he embarked on a new chapter of flatting near River Road, nestled along the picturesque Avon River. This time, his flatmates were Jarod Buchanan, a charismatic car sales guru, and Craig Forster, a talented graphic designer. The dynamic combination of personalities and professions brought a fresh and exciting energy to their shared living space.

Living alongside Jarod and Craig proved to be an enriching experience for Shem. They introduced him to new perspectives, professional insights, and a vibrant social circle. Each evening, they would gather in the cozy living room, exchanging stories, sharing laughs, and forming lasting friendships. The flat became a hub of creativity, with Craig's artistic endeavours and Jarod's sales expertise infusing the space with a dynamic and eclectic atmosphere.



Shem relished the opportunity to expand his social network and forge connections with individuals from different walks of life. He was exposed to the nuances of the sales industry through Jarod's anecdotes and invaluable advice, while Craig's graphic design prowess inspired Shem's own creative pursuits. The flat became a haven where ideas flowed freely, and the combined talents of the three flatmates gave rise to numerous collaborative projects and late-night brainstorming sessions.

Beyond their professional endeavours, Shem, Jarod, and Craig also explored the vibrant local scene together. They frequented nearby cafes, participated in community events along the river, and indulged in spontaneous adventures that created lifelong memories. From biking along the Avon River

to enjoying picnics in the nearby parks, their shared experiences deepened their bond and added a sense of excitement to their daily lives.

Living close to River Road on the Avon River proved to be a remarkable time of personal growth and connection for Shem. The flat became more than just a place to live; it was a nurturing environment that fostered creativity, friendship, and a sense of belonging. The memories created during this period would forever hold a special place in Shem's heart, serving as a reminder of the transformative power of new experiences and the incredible people who shaped his journey.

Throughout his employment journey, Shem continued to nurture his personal and professional growth. The experiences gained from working at Cartwright and Son enhanced his work ethic, attention to detail, and ability to adapt to different tasks. Simultaneously, his role as a presenter for Attitude New Zealand further developed his communication skills, empathy, and understanding of youth-related issues.

During his university years, Shem's sporting focus shifted towards football, marking a significant turning point in his athletic pursuits. Although he initially dabbled in cricket upon his return from the United Kingdom, he found the experience underwhelming, with low scores and umpiring duties dampening his enthusiasm for the sport.

In contrast, football captured Shem's interest and passion. Returning from his gap year with enhanced fitness and a renewed sense of determination, he seamlessly integrated into the Rangers AFC's first team. Initially starting on the bench, Shem's exceptional fitness levels and keen eye for goal propelled him into a prominent role within the team.

Playing alongside seasoned veterans and former New Zealand players, such as Alan Stroud, Gary Lund, and Alan Carval, Shem found himself in the company of esteemed role models. Their wealth of experience and skill provided invaluable guidance as he navigated the competitive football

landscape. Remarkably, in his first year, Shem enjoyed a \$25 win bonus per game, a significant reward for a university student and a testament to his impact on the team's success.

Rangers AFC held a storied history as one of the oldest football clubs in New Zealand. However, in 2007, they merged with New Brighton to form Coastal Spirit, marking a new chapter in Shem's football journey. Over the course of four seasons, Shem amassed 93 appearances for the 1<sup>st</sup> team scoring 34 goals and leaving an indelible mark on the field.

One notable achievement during Shem's time with Rangers was his remarkable scoring streak in the mainland Premier grade. He found the back of the net in seven consecutive games, showcasing his goal-scoring prowess and making a significant impact on the team's overall performance.

In addition to the thrilling on-field experiences, Shem cherished the camaraderie forged with his teammates, as well as the memorable trips away for matches in Nelson, Blenheim, and Chatham Cup games down in Dunedin. These journeys provided not only opportunities for competitive football but also the chance to build lasting friendships and create cherished memories.

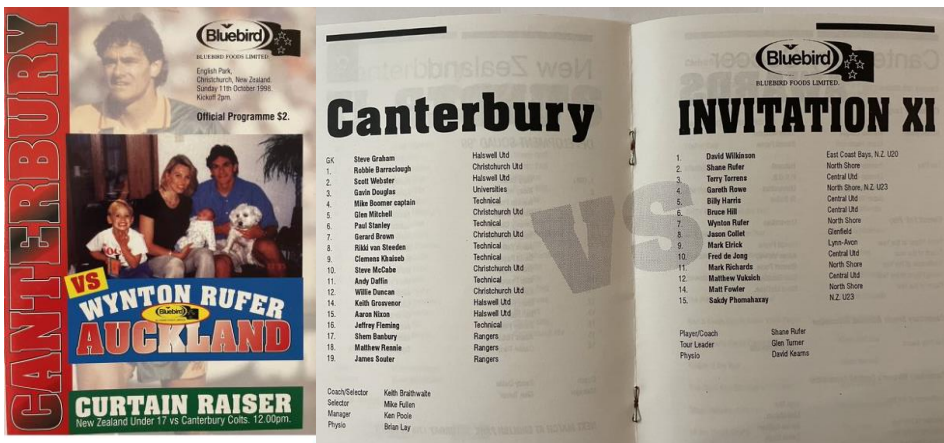
Shem's passion and dedication to football led to him achieving significant milestones in his playing career. As his skills continued to develop, he was rewarded with the opportunity to represent the Canterbury senior men's team in several highly anticipated matches.





Among his representative honours, Shem proudly donned the Canterbury jersey in clashes against formidable opponents such as Nelson, Otago, and Wellington. These encounters not only tested his abilities but also allowed him to showcase his talent on a bigger stage.

However, the pinnacle of Shem's representative journey came when he faced off against an Auckland side that boasted the legendary Wynton Rufer, recognized as the Oceania Player of the Century. This memorable match against Auckland proved to be a formidable challenge, with Canterbury putting up a valiant effort.



Although Canterbury faced a tough defeat, with the final scoreline reading 4-2 in favour of Auckland, the experience of sharing the field with such esteemed players and competing at a high level was a defining moment for Shem. It served as a testament to his skill, dedication, and determination as a footballer.

The opportunity to play against top-tier opponents and test his abilities against renowned players like Wynton Rufer provided invaluable experience and further fuelled Shem's passion for the beautiful game. These representative honours became cherished memories in his football journey,

reminding him of the hard work and commitment that led him to such prestigious opportunities.

Shem's time representing Canterbury on the football field not only allowed him to showcase his abilities but also instilled in him a deeper sense of camaraderie and sportsmanship. These experiences played a crucial role in shaping him as a player and further solidified his love for the game.

As we delve further into Shem Banbury's biography, we will witness the continued growth of his career, his dedication to community involvement, and his unwavering commitment to making a positive impact.

In October 2001, Shem Banbury took a significant step in his career by applying for a teaching position at Bethlehem College in Tauranga. Recognizing the potential of this opportunity, he flew up to Tauranga for an interview, allowing him to experience the vibrant and sunny Bay of Plenty firsthand. This region presented a stark contrast to Christchurch, where he had previously resided. The few days spent in the Bay of Plenty not only showcased the natural beauty of the area but also allowed Shem to immerse himself in the local culture and lifestyle.

## -NUMBERS -

Shem's dedication and passion for education paid off when he was fortunate enough to be offered the position as a Year 8 teacher at Bethlehem College. This achievement marked a significant milestone in his teaching career and set the stage for a new chapter in his professional journey. Starting in 2022, Shem would have the privilege of educating and mentoring students in their final year of primary school, preparing them for the transition to high school.

As a Year 8 teacher, Shem would play a vital role in shaping the academic, social, and emotional development of his students. He would have the opportunity to create a stimulating and supportive learning environment, fostering their curiosity, critical thinking skills, and love for learning. Additionally, Shem would guide and mentor his students as they navigate the challenges and changes that come with being in their final year of primary education.

The teaching position at Bethlehem College in Tauranga presented Shem with new opportunities for professional growth and development. He would have the chance to collaborate with a team of dedicated educators, sharing ideas, strategies, and best practices to enhance the learning experience for their students. Additionally, Shem would have access to resources and support systems that would enable him to excel in his role as a teacher.

Bethlehem College, known for its traditional Christian values, provided Shem with a unique experience during his time there. While the school upheld a strong moral foundation, Shem discovered a group of male staff members who shared his passion for occasional drinks and friendly wagers on sporting events. Due to the lack of a dedicated space, the Social Science

offices became their gathering spot, earning the endearing nickname of the "den of iniquity."

Situated directly below the principal's office, this unconventional meeting place added an element of excitement and secrecy to their social events. It became a hub of camaraderie and friendly competition, where colleagues would gather to enjoy drinks, engage in lively discussions, and place bets on various sporting events. Among the memorable occasions was the highly anticipated 2002 Football World Cup, which captivated their attention and inspired a significant number of wagers.

The atmosphere in the "den of iniquity" was filled with laughter, banter, and the thrill of friendly competition. Despite its unconventional location, the space became a symbol of camaraderie and served as a source of respite and enjoyment for the staff members. While the school upheld its traditional Christian values, this gathering spot allowed them to indulge in their shared interests and enjoy moments of relaxation and connection.

Although their activities might have been unconventional for a Christian school setting, the staff members involved in the "den of iniquity" understood the importance of balance and moderation. They found joy in their shared interests while maintaining their professional responsibilities and upholding the values of the school.

Shem treasured these moments as they provided an opportunity to bond with his colleagues and create lasting memories. The camaraderie and friendly competition fostered a sense of unity among the staff members, transcending their roles within the school and strengthening their professional relationships.

While the "den of iniquity" may have been an unexpected addition to Bethlehem College, it served as a testament to the diverse interests and friendships that can flourish within a community. It demonstrated that

individuals with shared passions can come together, even in unlikely circumstances, to find enjoyment and forge meaningful connections.

In hindsight, Shem recognized the value of these social gatherings, not only for the enjoyment they provided but also for the sense of camaraderie and support they fostered among the staff. The "den of iniquity" became a cherished space where friendships were nurtured, ideas were exchanged, and shared interests were celebrated.

During his tenure at Bethlehem College, Shem Banbury not only excelled as a teacher but also actively engaged in extracurricular activities, particularly in the realm of sports. His passion for sports and his commitment to nurturing well-rounded students led him to take on coaching roles for the school's cricket and football teams.

Shem's expertise and dedication were put to good use as he coached the 1st XI boys cricket team. His role involved training the team, developing their skills, and strategizing for matches. Through his guidance, the players were able to enhance their cricketing abilities, work as a cohesive unit, and compete against other schools.

In his first year of teaching, Shem took on the dual role of being a player coach for the 1st XI Football side. This allowed him to not only provide coaching guidance but also actively participate as a player on the team. His experience and skill on the field contributed to the overall performance and success of the team.

One of the most memorable moments during Shem's time as a player coach was the opportunity to compete in the Chatham Cup. The Chatham Cup is a prestigious national knockout tournament in New Zealand football, and participating in it was a remarkable achievement for both Shem and the team. Although the game ended in a 2-0 loss, the experience of playing at such a high level and representing Bethlehem College in a national competition was a source of pride for everyone involved.

However, the intensity of the game may have gotten the better of Shem, as he received a yellow card for verbal abuse directed at the referee. Recognizing the importance of sportsmanship and respectful behaviour, Shem's actions warranted a visit to the principal's office the following Monday. This incident served as a learning opportunity for Shem, highlighting the significance of maintaining composure and demonstrating respect for the officials and the spirit of the game.

Despite the disciplinary consequence, Shem's dedication to his coaching and playing roles continued to inspire and motivate his students. His passion for sports, combined with his teaching expertise, allowed him to foster teamwork, discipline, and perseverance in his students both on and off the field. Through these experiences, Shem was able to instil in his students the values of fair play, sportsmanship, and the importance of learning from both successes and setbacks.

During his time in Tauranga, Shem found himself in the warm and welcoming home of Lloyd and Judy Ashworth. Originally intended as a one-month stay, Shem's connection with the Ashworth's grew stronger, and he ended up residing with them for an extended period of two years at 73 Forrester Drive in Welcome Bay.

Lloyd Ashworth led a multifaceted life, serving as an employee of International Needs while also pursuing his passion as a part-time real estate agent. He possessed an adventurous spirit and was an active member of the Tauranga Swing Band, where his musical talents brought joy to both him and others. With a zest for life, Lloyd embraced new experiences and shared his vibrant energy with those around him.

Judy Ashworth, on the other hand, dedicated her time to working at a local doctor's surgery. Her nurturing nature and compassionate demeanour made her an integral part of the healthcare community, touching the lives of many patients. In their beautiful home overlooking the harbour, Judy created a

warm and inviting atmosphere, making it a place of solace and comfort for Shem.

Monty, the Ashworth's' small dog, added a delightful touch to the household. His playful antics and loyal companionship brought smiles and laughter to everyone's faces, creating a sense of warmth and homeliness. The presence of Monty added an extra layer of joy to Shem's daily life, and they formed a special bond during his stay.

Living at 73 Forrester Drive offered Shem a picturesque backdrop for various recreational activities. With the harbour within sight, he would often take advantage of the opportunity to sail the catamaran on the water, embracing the freedom and tranquillity that the open sea provided. These sailing adventures allowed him to find moments of peace and reflection, connecting with nature and the vastness of the ocean.

In the evenings, table tennis battles with Lloyd became a regular occurrence in their home. Engaging in friendly competition, Shem and Lloyd would test their skills and enjoy the spirited matches, fostering camaraderie and creating cherished memories. These lively encounters added a touch of excitement and camaraderie to their shared living experience.

During a significant period in his life, Shem Banbury found himself presented with a unique opportunity to immerse himself in the world of golf. A friend, George Kinghorn, secured a spot in the esteemed New Zealand Open golf tournament but needed a caddie. Although Shem possessed a reasonable understanding of the sport, this was an exhilarating leap into uncharted territory.

Recognizing the magnitude of the occasion, Shem dedicated himself to honing his golfing knowledge and skills. With passion and determination, he immersed himself in studying the intricacies of the game, learning the art of caddying, and understanding the nuances of each hole. This preparation



filled him with a sense of excitement as he looked forward to the opportunity to work alongside George at the prestigious Grange course in Auckland.

As the tournament unfolded, both Shem and George gave it their all, striving for success on the grand stage of the New Zealand Open. While George missed the cut by a mere stroke, the experience served as a testament to their collective effort and the camaraderie they shared. Shem's contributions as a caddie showcased his acquired knowledge and instincts, particularly on the greens, where his expertise proved invaluable.

Although the outcome may not have met their initial aspirations, the experience left an indelible mark on Shem's journey. The New Zealand Open golf tournament served as a pivotal moment, allowing him to immerse himself in a world that captivated him and provided valuable insights into the dedication, skill, and strategy required to compete at the highest level.

The time spent at Lloyd and Judy Ashworth's home not only provided Shem with a comfortable place to reside but also enriched his life with valuable friendships, shared experiences, and a sense of belonging. The Ashworth's hospitality, combined with the scenic surroundings and engaging activities, created a chapter in Shem's life that he would forever hold dear.

During Shem's tenure as a teacher at Bethlehem College, he seized an extraordinary opportunity to embark on a service trip to Borneo. Joined by approximately 14 students and four adults, the group set out on a transformative journey to this captivating island.

The adventure began with a flight to Malaysia, followed by a subsequent journey to the vibrant city of Miri, Borneo. From there, the group embarked on an awe-inspiring expedition along the picturesque Baram River. Over the course of approximately seven days, they ventured to remote areas, visiting small tribes and towns nestled along the riverbanks.

One of the highlights of the trip was the opportunity to interact with the local children, whose warm welcome and infectious enthusiasm left a lasting impression on Shem. On numerous occasions, he was called upon to join in their traditional dances, immersing himself in the rich cultural heritage of the region.

Borneo, renowned as the third-largest island in the world and the largest in Asia, captivated Shem with its breath-taking landscapes and diverse ecosystems. Situated at the geographic centre of Maritime Southeast Asia, the island occupies a strategic location, bordering notable Indonesian islands such as Java, Sulawesi, and Sumatra.



The trip to Borneo provided Shem and his fellow travellers with a unique blend of cultural immersion, service work, and awe-inspiring natural beauty. The experience not only broadened their horizons but also fostered a deep appreciation for the rich tapestry of human existence and the natural

wonders that grace our planet. This journey served as a reminder of the interconnectedness of our global community and the profound impact that individuals can make when they step outside their comfort zones to embrace new cultures and experiences.

During Shem's time at Bethlehem College, a significant event took place that would forever change his life. He crossed paths with Rachel Coster, a vibrant and captivating individual, at the Otumoetai Baptist Young Adults group. Their connection was immediate, and they quickly found themselves falling deeply in love.

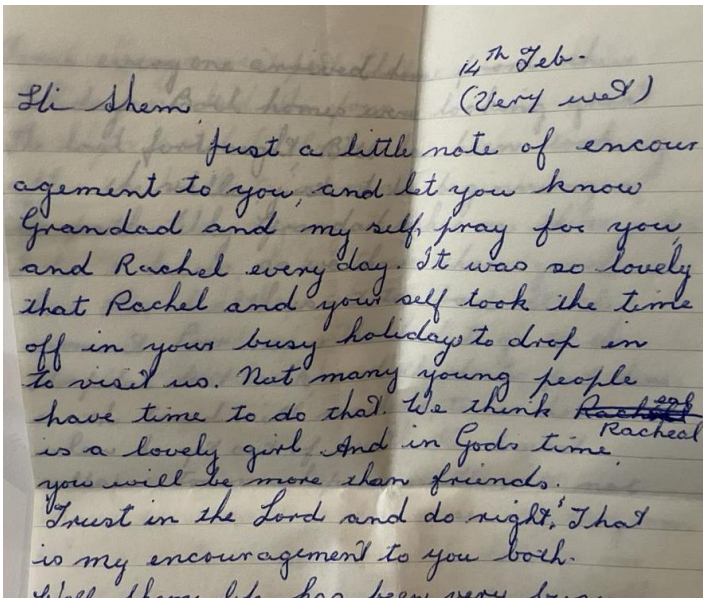


In the early days of Shem and Rachel's relationship, they embarked on a special trip to Christchurch, which held sentimental significance for Shem. One of the highlights of their visit was spending time with Shem's beloved

nana. Nana, with her wisdom and intuition, seemed to have a keen sense that there was something significant blossoming between Shem and Rachel.

During their visit, Nana shared a heartfelt letter with Shem, filled with words of love and encouragement. In that letter, she subtly hinted at the potential for a deeper connection between Shem and Rachel, expressing the notion that in God's time, their bond might transcend the realm of friendship.

As Shem read those words, he couldn't help but feel a sense of wonder and excitement. Nana's gentle observation resonated with the feelings that were growing within him. It was as if she saw the budding love between Shem and Rachel before they even fully realized it themselves. Nana's words became a gentle encouragement, fuelling their journey of discovery and love. They cherished the time spent with Nana, soaking up her wisdom, stories, and the unconditional love she bestowed upon them.



14<sup>th</sup> Feb.  
(Very wet)  
Hi Shem,  
just a little note of encouragement to you, and let you know Granddad and my self pray for you and Rachel every day. It was so lovely that Rachel and your self took the time off in your busy holidays to drop in to visit us. Not many young people have time to do that. We think Rachel is a lovely girl. And in Gods time you will be more than friends.  
Trust in the Lord and do right. That is my encouragement to you both.  
Nana

## -SONG OF SONGS -

Rachel, a pharmacist by profession, worked at Brookfield Pharmacy, bringing her knowledge and expertise to serve the community. Her intelligence, warm personality, and shared values resonated with Shem, deepening their bond and fostering a strong connection.

Their first official date as a couple was a memorable one. They attended the Bethlehem College Ball together, joining a larger group of teachers from the school. This special evening allowed them to not only enjoy each other's company but also celebrate alongside their colleagues, creating cherished memories that would last a lifetime.

Rachel Coster, a woman of many talents and a heart brimming with humour, was born into the warm embrace of Timaru, New Zealand on 27<sup>th</sup> May 1978. Her parents, Ray and Judy Coster, nurtured her in an environment where laughter and love flowed freely. As the second of four children, Rachel was blessed with siblings who would become her lifelong companions on the journey of life. Alongside her were Andrew, Stephen, and Ruth, forming a dynamic quartet that made the Coster household lively and vibrant.

In her formative years, Rachel's family made a significant move to Mount Maunganui, a coastal gem known for its golden beaches and relaxed lifestyle. It was here, against the backdrop of sunsets over the Tasman Sea, that Rachel's character and love for adventure began to take shape.

Rachel's educational journey was marked by determination and excellence. She started at Mount Primary School, where her curious mind was first awakened. As she transitioned to Mount Maunganui Intermediate, it became clear that Rachel possessed not only intelligence but also a unique ability to

find humour in everyday situations. This innate sense of humour would become one of her defining traits, endearing her to friends and family.

Her path eventually led her to Mount College, where she continued to excel academically. She then transitioned to Bethlehem College where her pursuit of knowledge and academic excellence bore fruit when she achieved the coveted title of Dux in her final year. This achievement was a testament to her unwavering commitment to her education and a glimpse into the tenacity that would drive her throughout her life.

With a burning desire to make a difference in the world, Rachel embarked on the next chapter of her journey, pursuing higher education. She attended universities in Otago and Auckland, where she dedicated herself to the study of pharmacy. Her goal was clear: to harness her skills and knowledge to improve the health and well-being of others.

Rachel's dedication and academic prowess culminated in her being awarded her Bachelor of Pharmacy in 1999, a significant achievement marked with honours. This accomplishment showcased not only her commitment to her chosen field but also her unwavering pursuit of excellence. It laid the foundation for her remarkable career as a pharmacist, where she would go on to make a lasting impact on the healthcare community and the lives of countless individuals she would serve in the years to come.

Yet, amid the serious pursuit of her dreams, Rachel's life was sprinkled with moments of humour. The yellow van that the family owned became a source of embarrassment for Rachel. Firstly, there was the unforgettable incident where she attempted to reverse the family's yellow van down a narrow driveway, resulting in an uproarious situation that would be recounted with laughter for years to come.

On that fateful day, Rachel embarked on what should have been a straightforward task: reversing the van down the narrow driveway. However, as fate would have it, the van had other plans in store. In a comedic

twist of events, the van seemed to have a mind of its own, leading to a sequence of unintentional mishaps that left us in stitches.

As we watched, amused and slightly perplexed, Rachel navigated the van with a mixture of determination and bemusement. The vehicle swayed and wobbled, nearly grazing the mailbox and executing an unplanned dance of sorts. It was a spectacle that could rival any slapstick comedy, and we couldn't contain our laughter. These moments of levity were a testament to Rachel's ability to find joy and amusement in life's quirkiest moments.

Another memorable incident in the yellow van occurred while she was out with her grandparents, embarking on a new adventure to try McDonald's for the first time. In an unexpected turn of events, they unwittingly navigated the McDonald's drive-through in the wrong direction. The situation left Rachel feeling deeply embarrassed, prompting her to take refuge in the back seat, head bowed in an attempt to avoid any further attention.

Rachel Coster's journey, marked by determination, academic excellence, and an infectious sense of humour, has taken her from the serene shores of Mount Maunganui to the halls of academia. As she continues to make her mark in the world of pharmacy, one can't help but be inspired by her unwavering commitment to her goals and her ability to embrace life's lighter side, making every moment brighter for those fortunate enough to share in her laughter.

Shem and Rachel's relationship began to blossom as they spent more time together, exploring different activities and sharing new experiences. Their connection grew stronger through their shared interests and adventures.

One of the ways they first connected was through Shem's soccer games. Rachel, being a spectator, was initially taken aback by Shem's passionate and vocal outbursts towards the referee. It was a side of Shem she hadn't witnessed before, but it intrigued her and sparked conversations between them about sportsmanship, competitiveness, and the intensity of the game.

Golf became another avenue for Shem and Rachel to bond. They enjoyed playing together at the Otumeotai golf course, challenging each other's skills and enjoying the beauty of the course. The shared love for the sport allowed them to spend quality time together, creating memorable moments filled with laughter and friendly competition.

However, one of the most cherished highlights for Rachel was when they decided to enrol in a dancing class together. It was a leap out of their comfort zones, embracing the rhythm and grace of dance. With each step and twirl, they discovered a new side of their relationship, finding joy in learning together and supporting each other's growth. The dance class provided an opportunity for them to connect on a deeper level, expressing themselves through movement and creating beautiful memories that would last a lifetime.

What captivated Shem from the very beginning was not only Rachel's striking beauty but also her vibrant faith and unwavering spirit. There was an undeniable aura of positivity that surrounded Rachel, drawing people towards her like a magnet. Her infectious enthusiasm for life and her deep-rooted faith were qualities that Shem found deeply appealing.

Rachel's unshakeable courage and inner strength were awe-inspiring. She faced life's challenges head-on, with a determination that knew no bounds. Whether it was pursuing her dreams in the world of pharmacy or taking on the responsibilities of everyday life, Rachel exhibited a remarkable resilience that Shem admired greatly.

One of Rachel's most endearing qualities was her boundless love and respect for others. She possessed a rare gift for treating everyone she encountered with kindness and affection. Her willingness to extend a helping hand to those in need reflected her compassionate heart. To Rachel, the act of caring for others was not merely a duty; it was a way of life.



In her professional life, Rachel's passion for her work as a pharmacist shone brightly. Her dedication to her patients and her commitment to ensuring their well-being were evident in every prescription she filled and every piece of advice she offered. Rachel viewed her role not just as a job but as an opportunity to make a positive impact on the lives of others.

But Rachel was not all seriousness and dedication. She had a vivacious personality that made every moment spent with her a joyous occasion. Her vibrant spirit infused life with a sense of adventure and excitement. Rachel's capacity for fun was boundless, and she had a unique ability to turn even the simplest of activities into a grand celebration. Whether it was exploring new places, embarking on spontaneous adventures, or simply sharing a hearty laugh, Rachel made every day a memorable experience.

In Rachel, Shem had found a partner who possessed not only outward beauty but also a beauty of character that was truly exceptional. Her faith, strength, kindness, determination, and zest for life made her the perfect complement to his own journey. Together, they would navigate the highs and lows of life, sharing in the joys and laughter that made their love story an enduring and remarkable one.



As they ventured into various activities and explored different facets of their personalities, Shem and Rachel's bond continued to strengthen. From the intensity of soccer games to the tranquility of golf and the grace of dancing, they discovered new dimensions of their relationship, fostering a deep

connection built on shared experiences and a genuine understanding of each other.

The love between Shem and Rachel continued to flourish, and within a relatively short period of 14 months after their first meeting. Shem took Ray and Judy out for a meal that holds a special place in his heart. Although the pretext was a lovely dinner, Shem's true intention was to seek Ray and Judy's blessing for their daughter's hand in marriage. With a mix of excitement and nerves, Shem carefully planned the evening, selecting a cozy booth at a small restaurant located on the Strand, Tauranga's picturesque waterfront.

As they sat down to enjoy the meal, the ambiance of the restaurant set the stage for an intimate and heartfelt conversation.

Ray Coster, affectionately known as "the Colonel," had a fascinating journey throughout his life. Born on October 24, 1951, in Winton, New Zealand, Ray's adventurous spirit led him to travel extensively and discover his favourite destinations. Among them, Southern France held a special place in his heart, where he relished the taste of a good wine amidst the picturesque landscapes.

Ray's educational journey began at Winton Primary, where he laid the foundation for his future endeavours. He continued his studies at Central Southland College, where he honed his skills and expanded his knowledge. Determined to pursue higher education, Ray enrolled at Otago University, embracing the opportunities that academia had to offer.

However, it was Ray's cycling expedition that stands as one of his most remarkable achievements. With unwavering determination and a love for adventure, he embarked on a biking journey from Dunedin to Picton, tracing the scenic route along the captivating West Coast of the South Island. This incredible feat not only showcased Ray's physical endurance but also allowed him to witness the breath-taking beauty of New Zealand's rugged coastline.



Throughout his life, Ray Coster's vibrant spirit and love for exploration shaped his experiences and left a lasting impression on those around him. From his educational pursuits to his travels and cycling adventures, he embraced life's opportunities with enthusiasm, creating cherished memories along the way.

As the conversation flowed, Shem mustered up the courage to express his love and commitment to Rachel, making it clear that he wished to spend the rest of his life with her. He conveyed his deep respect and admiration for Ray and Judy and emphasized his desire to honour their daughter in the best possible way. With a mixture of anticipation and vulnerability, Shem asked

for their blessing, hoping that they would join him in the joyous journey of their future union.

Ray and Judy, recognizing the sincerity and genuine love Shem had for Rachel, listened attentively to his heartfelt words. They saw the happiness in their daughter's eyes when she was with Shem and felt the connection between them. Filled with pride and trust, they warmly extended their blessings, acknowledging Shem's devotion, character, and unwavering commitment to their beloved daughter.



The atmosphere in the restaurant seemed to radiate with joy and love as the group celebrated this significant milestone in their lives. The evening became a testament to the bond between Shem, Rachel, Ray, and Judy, solidifying their shared belief in the power of love and family.

The next step for Shem was to ask for Rachel's hand in marriage. In a picturesque setting on Moturiki Island, also known as Leisure Island, Shem planned a momentous occasion that would change their lives forever. Little

did Rachel know that what seemed like a casual evening to watch a basketball game would turn into a beautiful surprise. With the help of his close friend Alistair Brownlee, Shem had secretly arranged a romantic dessert area on the secluded end of the island.

As the sun began to set, casting a warm golden glow over the breathtaking landscape, Shem and Rachel enjoyed a delightful dinner at a local restaurant. Rachel had no inkling of the extraordinary events that were about to unfold. With each passing moment, Shem's excitement and anticipation grew, knowing that this night would be etched in their memories forever.

After dinner, they took a leisurely stroll along the shoreline, the gentle sound of waves serenading their steps. As they reached the end of Leisure Island, Shem led Rachel to the lovingly prepared spot, adorned with flickering candles and a table filled with delectable desserts. The enchanting ambiance created an atmosphere of romance and serenity.

With nervous excitement, Shem took Rachel's hand, gazing deeply into her eyes. His heart raced as he expressed his love and commitment, recounting the beautiful journey they had shared together. And then, with trembling hands, he got down on one knee and asked the question that would change their lives forever.

In that magical moment, time stood still as Rachel, overwhelmed with joy and love, said yes. The world seemed to burst with celebration as they embraced, sealing their commitment to each other. They basked in the euphoria of the occasion, knowing that this cherished memory would forever hold a special place in their hearts. Moturiki Island, with its stunning beauty and the sweetness of that evening, became an everlasting symbol of their love and the beginning of their journey as an engaged couple.



Their wedding day was a beautiful celebration held at St Andrew's Church in Mount Maunganui, a place filled with joy and blessings. Surrounded by their loved ones, Shem and Rachel exchanged vows, promising to support and cherish each other for a lifetime. The ceremony marked the beginning of their journey as a married couple, embarking on a path filled with love, shared experiences, and mutual growth.



Shem and Rachel's wedding day was a culmination of love, joy, and memorable moments. The ceremony took place at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Mount Maunganui, a meaningful location for Rachel as it was her family's church. Lloyd Ashworth, a dear friend of the couple and a minister, officiated the service, adding a personal touch to the special occasion. Ray and Ross, fathers of the bride and groom respectively, played important roles during the ceremony, symbolizing their support and unity as families merged.





The bridal party consisted of Marcus and Roly, who stood by Shem's side as his groomsmen. Ruth and Greta were Rachel's bridesmaids, their presence added to the beauty and elegance of the occasion, standing beside Rachel as her closest friends and confidantes.

Following the heartfelt ceremony, the wedding celebration continued at the Tauranga Yacht Club. The venue provided a scenic backdrop, overlooking the glistening waters of Tauranga Harbor, creating a picturesque setting for the reception. Family, friends, and loved ones gathered to celebrate the union of Shem and Rachel, filling the air with laughter, music, and love.







Among the highlights of the evening was Shem's speech, which added a touch of humour and adventure to the festivities. Earlier that day, Shem, accompanied by his friends Tim, Marcus, and Roly, embarked on a quest to secure a duck for a special purpose. The search for the duck took them on a wild adventure across the Bay of Plenty region, exploring farms and picturesque landscapes in pursuit of the perfect avian companion.

During his speech, Shem used the story of the duck to illustrate the concept of wedding gifts and the unexpected surprises that come with them. As he presented the duck to Rachel, unfortunately, the feathered guest became a little too frightened and left an unintentional "gift" on the pristine white tablecloth of the head table, evoking laughter and adding a memorable twist to the evening.

While the reception was filled with love, laughter, and delicious cuisine, there was an unexpected twist that unfolded later in the night. Rachel and Shem, caught up in the excitement of the day, realized they had forgotten to eat. Feeling hungry in the early hours of the morning, they embarked on a spontaneous adventure to satisfy their hunger cravings. They made their way

to the local petrol station, where they shared a mince and cheese pie, cementing their new love in a moment of simplicity and culinary delight.



Shem and Rachel's honeymoon was a time of relaxation, adventure, and cultural exploration. After their wedding celebrations, they embarked on their first destination, Rotorua, where they immersed themselves in the natural wonders and vibrant Māori culture of the region. They marvelled at the geothermal geysers, indulged in luxurious spa treatments, and experienced the warm hospitality of the local people.

From Rotorua, the couple jetted off to the tropical paradise of Vanuatu, a destination known for its stunning beaches, crystal-clear waters, and rich cultural heritage. In Vanuatu, they embraced the laid-back island lifestyle and enjoyed the idyllic surroundings.

During their stay in Vanuatu, Shem and Rachel indulged in various activities, including snorkelling in the pristine coral reefs that teemed with colourful marine life. They explored the local attractions, immersing themselves in the

island's lush landscapes, waterfalls, and traditional villages, where they learned about the customs and traditions of the Ni-Vanuatu people.

One evening, while dining at a local restaurant, Shem decided to try a unique local delicacy known as "bat." Served on a bed of rice, this culinary adventure allowed Shem to savour the flavours of the island and experience the diversity of the local cuisine.

As a side note Shem always has an attraction to strange food. Who could forget the encounter with sheep brains at the quaint Somerset Cottage, where Shem's curiosity and willingness to step outside his comfort zone truly shone. While some may shy away from such daring delicacies, Shem's insatiable curiosity and love for culinary exploration have made him a legend among his friends and family, always eager to embark on a gastronomic adventure.

One of the most memorable aspects of their honeymoon was celebrating their first Christmas together on the beautiful island of Vanuatu. They embraced the holiday spirit in a tropical setting, creating new traditions and cherishing the joy of being together as a married couple.

Right after Shem and Rachel's wedding, another union took place in Cambridge—Stephen's marriage to Karen. Stephen, Rachel's younger brother, was born on 30<sup>th</sup> May 1981 with big aspirations in the business world. When he wasn't parading around with his shirt off, he often found himself dreaming about owning his very own supermarket empire.

Stephen has a knack for sharing an intriguing story with everyone he meets—he proudly proclaims that he was the first person to score a century for the Bethlehem College 1st XI cricket team. Though this remarkable achievement lacks concrete evidence in historical records, it remains a legendary tale that Stephen delights in recounting.

Beyond his entrepreneurial ambitions and cricket accolades, Stephen has developed a passion for pushing the limits of physical endurance through

long-distance ultra marathons. With every race he conquers, he inspires others to embrace their own challenges and strive for greatness.

While Stephen claims to hold a high-flying position at a prestigious bank in London, rumours swirl among family and friends. Many playfully speculate that his true occupation goes far beyond banking, suggesting he may secretly work as an undercover agent for MI5, the renowned British intelligence agency. Although it's all in good fun, the mystery surrounding Stephen's professional life adds an air of excitement and intrigue to family gatherings.

Through his vibrant personality, athletic pursuits, and enigmatic professional ventures, Stephen adds a dash of excitement and curiosity to Shem's life, making him an unforgettable character in the fabric of their shared experiences.



Born on 23rd March 1993, Karen, Shem's sister-in-law, embarked on a fulfilling career as an occupational therapist. With her compassionate nature and desire to make a positive impact on people's lives, she dedicated herself to helping others overcome physical and mental challenges, allowing them to regain independence and live fulfilling lives.

Karen possesses a vibrant spirit and a love for pushing her physical limits. She finds joy in participating in triathlons, a demanding sport that combines swimming, cycling, and running. Not only does she strive for personal excellence, but she also serves as an inspiration to those around her, encouraging them to embrace an active and healthy lifestyle.

When it comes to commuting, Karen opts for an unconventional approach. Instead of relying on traditional means of transportation, she eagerly hops on her bike and pedals her way to work. Not only does this keep her physically fit, but it also allows her to enjoy the fresh air and connect with the world around her.

In 2006, Karen, along with her husband Steven, embarked on an exciting adventure by moving to London. Since then, they have made the bustling city their home, immersing themselves in its vibrant culture and diverse community. They have also become actively involved in their local church, where they find great joy in nurturing and supporting the young people who are part of their congregation. Their unwavering dedication to their faith and commitment to fostering a nurturing environment has made them valued members of their church community.

Karen's warm heart, dedication to her profession, and commitment to living a healthy lifestyle serve as a shining example of strength and resilience. Her love for adventure, whether it be through sports or exploring new cities, adds an exciting dynamic to Shem's life, making her an integral part of their shared experiences and cherished memories.



After returning home from their honeymoon, the Banbury's were excited to establish their first home in 10 Pokapu Place, Cambridge Heights. The house, though simple with three bedrooms and one bathroom, held great potential for them. Shem and Rachel shared a love for renovation projects and saw this as an opportunity to personalize their space.

Eager to make their new house feel like a home, Shem and Rachel embarked on a journey of renovation. They enthusiastically painted the entire inside of the house, carefully selecting colours that reflected their style and created a welcoming ambiance. The task of painting together became a bonding experience for the couple, as they worked side by side, transforming each room with their own personal touch.

With the walls refreshed, Shem and Rachel turned their attention to the flooring. They decided to put down new carpet, choosing a soft and durable option that would provide comfort underfoot. As they laid the carpet together, they envisioned the cosy and warm atmosphere it would bring to their home.

The kitchen held a special place in their hearts, as it would serve as a hub for shared meals and culinary adventures. Shem and Rachel took on the challenge of renovating the kitchen, carefully planning the layout and selecting modern fixtures and appliances. With their combined efforts, they created a functional and stylish space where they could prepare meals together and entertain friends and family.

During these early days of marriage, Shem found fulfilment in his teaching role at Bethlehem College. He enjoyed working with his students and contributing to their education and personal growth. Rachel continued her position as a pharmacist at Brookfield Pharmacy, using her expertise to provide care and support to the community.

Amidst their professional commitments and the renovation project, Shem and Rachel cherished the simplicity of their married life. They relished in the

quiet moments spent together, whether it was sharing a meal, enjoying a movie night, or simply being in each other's company. Their home in Cambridge Heights became a haven, filled with love, laughter, and the promise of a bright future.

As Shem and Rachel settled into their roles as husband and wife, they nurtured their relationship and supported each other's dreams and aspirations. Together, they built a strong foundation for their life together, grounded in love, shared interests, and a passion for creating a warm and inviting home.

After considering the idea of working overseas, both Rachel and Shem were eager to embark on a new adventure. Shem's interest in exploring the United Kingdom led him to send his CV to schools in Scotland, and he received a positive response from Belhaven Hill School, a small preparatory school located in Dunbar.

Following a series of interviews, Shem secured a teaching position at Belhaven Hill School, where he would be responsible for instructing Form 3 and 4 students in subjects such as Maths, English, and Geography. Excited about the opportunity, Shem and Rachel prepared themselves for a new chapter in their lives.

## -EXODUS AGAIN -

Belhaven Hill School, nestled within beautiful grounds, became their home for the next two years. Initially, they resided in the front Cottage and later moved to the Stable house on the school premises. Living on-site provided them with a unique experience immersed in the vibrant school community.

Rachel, in her first year, continued her work as a pharmacist, utilizing her skills and knowledge to serve the local community. However, in the second year, she transitioned to a teaching role at the school, focusing on subjects such as Religious Education (RE) and Geography. This allowed her to engage with students in a different capacity and contribute to their educational journey.

Life at Belhaven Hill School was filled with excitement and activity. Being a boarding school, the days were long, beginning at 8 am and concluding with games in the afternoon. Shem fully embraced his role as a teacher, dedicating himself to the students' academic progress and personal development. Additionally, he took on the responsibility of overseeing the dorms and ensuring the students adhered to their bedtime routines during his assigned duty night each week.

The vibrant school environment provided numerous opportunities for growth and connection. Shem and Rachel forged meaningful relationships with their colleagues, students, and the broader school community. They immersed themselves in the unique atmosphere of Belhaven Hill School, fostering a love for teaching and a deep appreciation for the boarding school experience.

Shem and Rachel cherished their time socializing with fellow teachers at Belhaven Hill School, forming close bonds with various individuals who

added joy and laughter to their lives. One couple they frequently enjoyed dinner with was Kate and Mike Gayle. Kate was a delightful person, but Mike's exuberant personality often reminded Shem of Barney the dinosaur. As the nights progressed, fuelled by his love for Elton John and a few drinks, Mike would become increasingly animated and boisterous, adding an extra dose of entertainment to their outings.

Another remarkable pair at the school were William and Leslie Townsend, two wonderful individuals from South Africa who resided on the premises. Their infectious positivity and friendly nature made them a pleasure to be around, and Shem and Rachel cherished the moments spent in their company, sharing stories and forming lasting friendships.



Among their closest friends were Liam and Marnie Harvey, the House Masters. Liam, a proud Scotsman with a passion for golf and a mischievous streak, often found delight in playing practical jokes. One incident stands out in Shem's memory. During a staff meeting, the headmaster entered the room, expressing his desire for an end to anymore "silly behaviour and practical jokes." As the headmaster continued speaking, Liam nonchalantly walked to

his cubby hole, intending to retrieve a letter. However, upon opening the small door, an unexpected cascade of approximately 50 golf balls came tumbling out, bouncing and rolling across the hard wooden floors, causing quite a disruption to the serious proceedings. In the moment, it may not have been seen as funny, but looking back, Shem couldn't help but recall it as one of the funniest and most memorable incidents they experienced together.

The camaraderie and light-hearted moments shared with the teachers at Belhaven Hill School enriched Shem and Rachel's experience, creating treasured memories and fostering strong connections that would endure beyond their time at the school.

During their time at the boarding school, Shem encountered an incident involving a boy named Rafe. Rafe was generally well-behaved, but there were moments when he got a bit carried away. One night, Shem found himself growing frustrated with Rafe's refusal to go to sleep.

Summoning his sternest teacher voice, Shem demanded that Rafe get out of bed and stand on the landing with his nose against the wall, instructing him not to move until given permission. With a sense of authority, Shem hoped to teach Rafe a lesson about the importance of following rules and respecting bedtime routines.

Two hours later, lying in bed, Shem suddenly remembered that he hadn't sent Rafe back to his own bed. Realizing his mistake, he hurried over to the landing, half-expecting to find Rafe long gone. To his surprise and credit, Rafe was still there, his legs trembling, and his nose pressed against the wall. It was a testament to the boy's obedience and determination to follow instructions.

With a mixture of relief and admiration for Rafe's adherence to the imposed punishment, Shem kindly asked him to return to his own bed, reminding him once again about the importance of refraining from talking after lights out. It served as a reminder for Shem to be more mindful and attentive in his role as

a teacher, ensuring that discipline was administered appropriately and with fairness.

In the end, this incident highlighted the challenges and responsibilities of maintaining discipline within a boarding school setting, while also emphasizing the resilience and compliance demonstrated by the students.

Beyond their professional responsibilities, Shem and Rachel cherished the beauty of their surroundings and the rich cultural heritage of Scotland. They took advantage of their time in Dunbar to explore the local attractions, immerse themselves in the Scottish traditions, and build lasting memories together.

During his time in Scotland, Shem embarked on a monumental challenge – the Edinburgh marathon. With a mix of excitement and nerves, he dedicated himself to the training regimen, diligently preparing his body for the gruelling 42.195-kilometer race. While his training had been consistent, Shem had unknowingly overlooked some crucial aspects, including the necessity of longer runs that would help build endurance for the latter stages of the marathon.

As the day of the race arrived, Shem found himself amidst a sea of enthusiastic participants, each with their own personal goals and aspirations. The first 30 kilometres of the race seemed to fly by as Shem confidently maintained a strong pace, clocking in at an impressive 2 hours and 8 minutes. However, unbeknownst to him, the challenges that lay ahead would test not only his physical stamina but also his mental fortitude.

As Shem entered the final stretch of the marathon, he felt the effects of his insufficient preparation. The toll of poor dietary choices and inadequate hydration began to manifest, causing his energy levels to plummet. The last 12 kilometres became a gruelling battle, a test of resilience and determination. Every step felt like an uphill struggle as his body pleaded for nourishment and replenishment.

At one particularly challenging moment, the sight of a nearby McDonald's tempted Shem. The thought of satisfying his cravings and finding respite from the physical and mental strain was enticing. However, a lack of funds prevented him from succumbing to this momentary weakness. With an unwavering commitment to finish what he had started, he pushed through the pain and discomfort, relying on sheer willpower to propel him forward.

Finally, after what felt like an eternity, Shem crossed the finish line, exhausted but filled with a sense of accomplishment. Despite the difficulties encountered during the last stretch of the race, he completed the Edinburgh marathon in a respectable time of 3 hours and 45 minutes. Though not the outcome he had initially envisioned, the experience served as a valuable lesson, teaching him the importance of comprehensive training, proper nutrition, and hydration in endurance events.

During their time in the United Kingdom, Rachel and Shem seized the opportunity to explore various destinations around the world. They maximized their weekends and holidays to embark on memorable trips and create unforgettable experiences together.

Throughout their journey, Rachel and Shem immersed themselves in the vibrant cultures, indulged in delectable cuisine, and created memories that would last a lifetime. From the stunning beaches of Greece to the art-filled cities of Italy, this holiday allowed them to deepen their love for travel, expand their perspectives, and forge a stronger bond as they experienced the wonders of the world together.



One of their most memorable weekend getaways was to the historic city of York. As they strolled through the cobbled streets, Shem and Rachel were transported back in time, surrounded by medieval architecture and centuries of history. They had the incredible opportunity to witness the Master's snooker competition, indulging in their shared passion for sports. The atmosphere was electric as they watched the skillful players compete, their cue actions precise and strategic. The cheers and tension filled the air, adding to the excitement of the event. It was a weekend that combined their love for travel, sports, and the vibrant atmosphere of a bustling city.

Their trekking also led them to the breathtaking landscapes of northern Scotland. They embarked on a journey that took them to picturesque towns such as Peebles and Stirling. Nestled amidst rolling hills and rugged terrain, these charming towns offered a glimpse into Scotland's rich history and natural beauty. Shem and Rachel immersed themselves in the local culture, exploring ancient castles and learning about the battles that shaped the nation. In Stirling, they marveled at the imposing Stirling Castle, a symbol of Scotland's medieval power. The panoramic views from the castle's ramparts left them in awe of the stunning Scottish countryside that stretched as far as the eye could see.

As they ventured through northern Scotland, Shem and Rachel found themselves captivated by the majestic landscapes that surrounded them. They embarked on scenic hikes, breathing in the crisp mountain air and soaking in the serenity of the remote wilderness. The lush greenery, cascading waterfalls, and tranquil lochs painted a picture of natural beauty that left them humbled and inspired. They encountered friendly locals who shared stories of ancient legends and traditions, deepening their appreciation for the rich cultural heritage of the region.

Throughout their journey in York and northern Scotland, Shem and Rachel embraced the opportunity to connect with history, nature, and the vibrant spirit of the places they visited. Their experiences were filled with moments



of awe, laughter, and discovery, reinforcing their shared love for travel and exploration. These weekend getaways served as reminders of the vast and diverse wonders that awaited them in their adventures, inspiring them to continue seeking new experiences and creating lasting memories together.

Their travels extended beyond the United Kingdom as they ventured to the enchanting city of Barcelona. This vibrant Spanish metropolis captivated Shem and Rachel with its rich history, stunning architecture, and lively atmosphere. Barcelona held a special significance for them, as it was the city that hosted the memorable 1996 Olympic Games, a significant event that left a lasting impression on their lives.

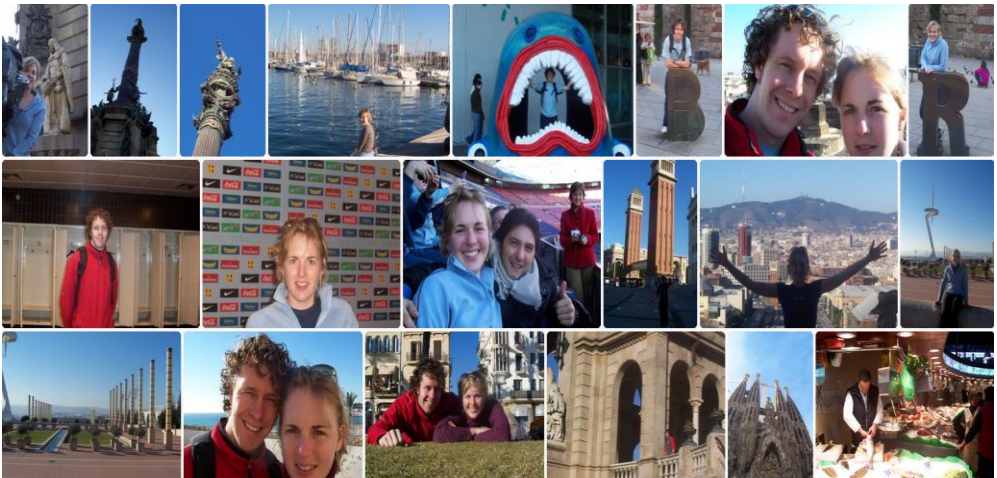
One of the highlights of their Barcelona adventure was exploring the iconic sites from the 1996 Olympics. Shem and Rachel dedicated hours to walking through the city, retracing the footsteps of the athletes who had competed in the games. They marveled at the Montjuïc Olympic Stadium, relishing the opportunity to stand on the same track where legendary athletes had once raced and set records. The stadium's grandeur and history enveloped them, filling their hearts with a sense of awe and inspiration.

As they delved deeper into the city's vibrant culture, Shem and Rachel discovered the architectural wonders created by renowned Catalan architect Antoni Gaudí. The awe-inspiring Sagrada Família, with its intricate details and soaring spires, left them spellbound. They wandered through Park Güell, a whimsical wonderland filled with colorful mosaics, winding pathways, and panoramic views of the city.

Barcelona also delighted their taste buds with its culinary offerings. They savored tapas at bustling local markets, indulging in a variety of flavors and textures. From fresh seafood dishes to delectable paella and traditional Catalan delicacies, they immersed themselves in the city's gastronomic delights, savoring each bite as a culinary adventure.

One of the most memorable experiences in Barcelona was Rachel's dream come true at the renowned Benabau Stadium. As a devoted football enthusiast, she had the unique opportunity to sit in the manager's chair, basking in the aura of the iconic stadium that had witnessed numerous victories and historic moments. It was a surreal experience that filled her with a profound sense of joy and fulfilment.

Throughout their time in Barcelona, Shem and Rachel were captivated by the city's energy, artistic flair, and passionate spirit. They embraced the vibrant nightlife, strolled along the famous Las Ramblas, and explored the narrow alleyways of the Gothic Quarter, stumbling upon hidden gems and charming boutiques.



The trip to Amsterdam and Paris was a remarkable adventure that Shem and Rachel embarked upon, accompanied by their dear friends George and Tara Kinghorn. The journey was filled with laughter, discovery, and unforgettable experiences that strengthened their bond and created cherished memories.

Their first destination was Amsterdam, a city known for its picturesque canals, historic architecture, and vibrant culture. As they strolled along the enchanting streets, they marveled at the charming Dutch houses, adorned

with colourful tulips spilling from window boxes. The group explored the famous Van Gogh Museum, immersing themselves in the works of the legendary artist, and they couldn't resist taking a leisurely boat ride along the scenic canals, admiring the city from a unique perspective.

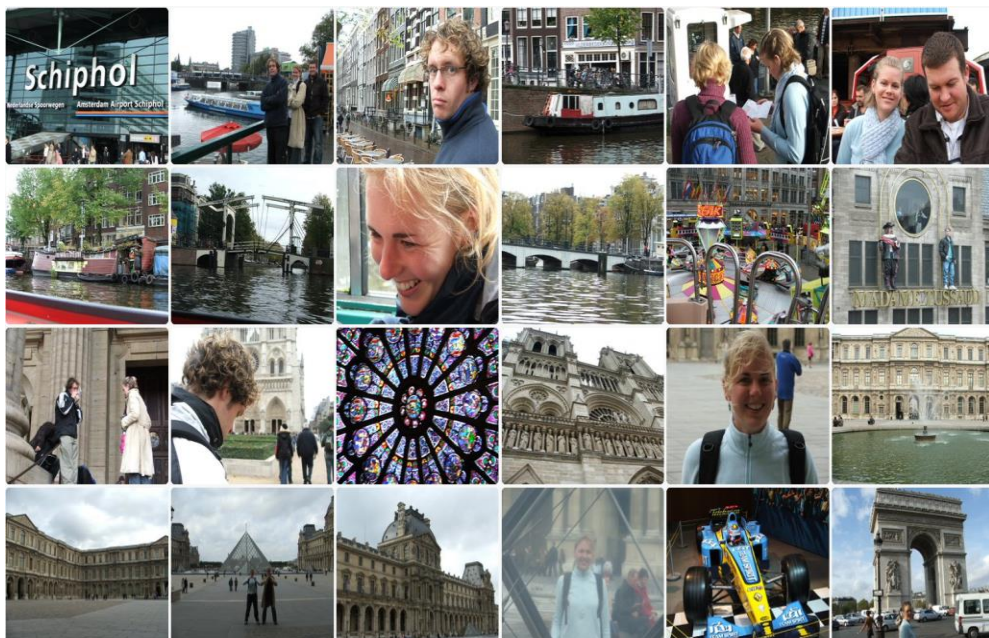
Amsterdam had its fair share of surprises in store for them as well. One day, while wandering through the bustling streets, they stumbled upon a bustling riverfront where a lively riverboat race was taking place. Excited by the spectacle, they joined the crowd, cheering on the participants as they maneuvered their boats with skill and determination. However, in a surprising turn of events, they witnessed a dramatic riverboat crash that momentarily stunned onlookers. The incident became a story they would retell with amusement and disbelief, a memorable moment of unexpected excitement during their Amsterdam escapade.

Leaving the enchanting canals of Amsterdam behind, Shem, Rachel, George, and Tara boarded a high-speed train that whisked them away to the captivating city of Paris. Arriving at the Gare du Nord, they were greeted by the grandeur of the Eiffel Tower, standing tall and majestic against the Parisian skyline. They spent hours wandering through the Louvre, marveling at the iconic Mona Lisa and other masterpieces that adorned the museum's hallowed halls.

The group ventured to the bohemian neighbourhood of Montmartre, where they immersed themselves in the artistic ambiance of the historic district. They climbed the steps of the Sacré-Cœur Basilica, enjoying panoramic views of the city below and relishing the charm of the bustling streets lined with artists' studios and cafés.

Evenings were spent savouring delectable French cuisine, indulging in mouthwatering pastries, and sipping fine wine at cozy sidewalk bistros. They wandered along the banks of the Seine River, taking in the romantic atmosphere and admiring the illuminated bridges that spanned the water.

Throughout their journey, the company of George and Tara added an extra layer of joy and camaraderie to the trip. They shared laughter, engaged in meaningful conversations, and revealed in each other's company. From exploring hidden gems to indulging in local delicacies, their time together in Amsterdam and Paris was a testament to the enduring bonds of friendship and the joy of shared experiences.



As the trip came to an end, Shem and Rachel reflected on the profound impact that this adventure had on their lives. The sights, sounds, and shared moments of discovery had enriched their souls and deepened their appreciation for the beauty and diversity of the world. With hearts full of gratitude and a treasure trove of memories, they bid farewell to Amsterdam and Paris, knowing that their journey had left an indelible mark on their lives and their friendship with George and Tara.

Another memorable excursion took Shem and Rachel to Denmark, marking their first-time setting foot in a Scandinavian country. The journey began with

a rough and adventurous ferry ride across the North Sea, braving the choppy waves and gusty winds. As the ferry swayed with the motion of the sea, Shem and Rachel held on to the railings, feeling the thrill of the unpredictable voyage and exchanging excited glances.

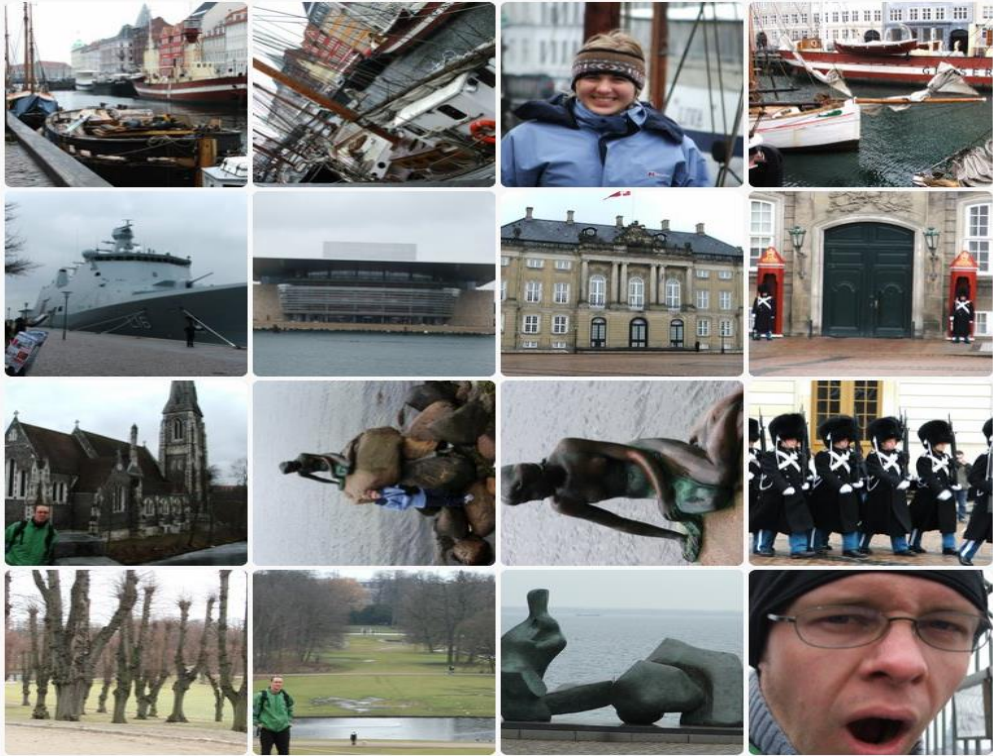
Upon arrival in Denmark, they were greeted by a land of enchanting beauty and rich cultural heritage. They embarked on a weekend filled with exploration, immersing themselves in the Scandinavian culture that surrounded them. The quaint towns and charming countryside of Denmark beckoned them to wander through cobblestone streets lined with colourful houses, adorned with blooming flowers that added a touch of vibrancy to the landscape.

During their stay, they ventured to the historic city of Copenhagen, where they marveled at iconic landmarks such as the majestic Christiansborg Palace, the picturesque Nyhavn Harbor, and the captivating Little Mermaid statue. The city's blend of modern architecture and centuries-old buildings provided a fascinating backdrop to their journey, offering glimpses into the past while embracing contemporary design.

Food became an integral part of their Danish experience, as they savoured traditional dishes that showcased the region's culinary delights. They indulged in smørrebrød, an open-faced sandwich adorned with a variety of toppings, including herring, shrimp, and liver pate. They sampled creamy Danish pastries, such as wienerbrød and kanelsnegle, savouring each delicate and flaky bite. With each meal, they discovered the Danish philosophy of hygge, finding warmth and comfort in the simple pleasures of good food and cozy surroundings.

Beyond the cities, Shem and Rachel ventured into the serene Danish countryside, where rolling hills, lush meadows, and idyllic villages awaited them. They explored the fairy-tale-like landscapes of the island of Funen, the birthplace of renowned storyteller Hans Christian Andersen. They strolled

through the stunning gardens of Egeskov Castle, captivated by the meticulously maintained grounds and the rich history that permeated every corner.



The couple's journey to Budapest, Hungary was an adventure filled with unforgettable moments and cultural exploration. As they stepped foot in the city, they were greeted by the enchanting sight of grandiose architecture, blending influences from the Gothic, Renaissance, and Baroque periods. The trio, accompanied by Rachel's sister, Ruth, embarked on a quest to uncover the secrets and stories hidden within the walls of this once communist country.

During their time in Budapest, Shem, Rachel, and Ruth braved the extreme cold that swept across the city during winter. They wrapped themselves in

warm coats, scarves, and gloves, ready to embrace the frosty temperatures that added a touch of magic to their experience. The icy air seemed to heighten their senses as they wandered through the historic streets and squares, marveling at the iconic landmarks that dotted the cityscape.

Ruth, born on June 10th, 1985, is a vibrant and adventurous individual who embraces life to the fullest. Her love for travel has taken her to various corners of the world, with her favourite destinations being the Pacific Islands and Southern France. However, an unfortunate encounter with seasickness during a cruise left her with a lasting aversion to such experiences.

Ruth's educational journey began at Mount Primary, where she laid the foundation for her academic pursuits. She continued her studies at Mount Intermediate, further nurturing her passion for learning and personal growth. Later, she enrolled at Bethlehem College, where she thrived academically and assumed the esteemed role of head girl. This position allowed her to showcase her leadership skills and dedication to serving her school community.

Driven by her passion for education and the desire to make a positive impact on young minds, Ruth pursued a career in teaching. She currently holds a position at Bethlehem College, where she imparts knowledge, nurtures creativity, and guides her students on their educational journey. Her enthusiasm and dedication inspire those around her, creating a positive and supportive learning environment.





Ruth's adventurous spirit knows no bounds. She is a daredevil at heart, constantly seeking exhilarating experiences that push her boundaries. One of her notable feats includes skydiving, a thrilling and adrenaline-pumping adventure that showcases her fearlessness and zest for life. Through these daring endeavours, Ruth continues to embrace new challenges, conquering her fears and inspiring others to step out of their comfort zones.

Beyond her adventurous pursuits, Ruth is a warm-hearted and compassionate individual. She values her relationships with family and friends, always offering support and being there when needed. Her presence brings joy and laughter to any gathering, and her kindness and empathy create a strong bond with those around her.

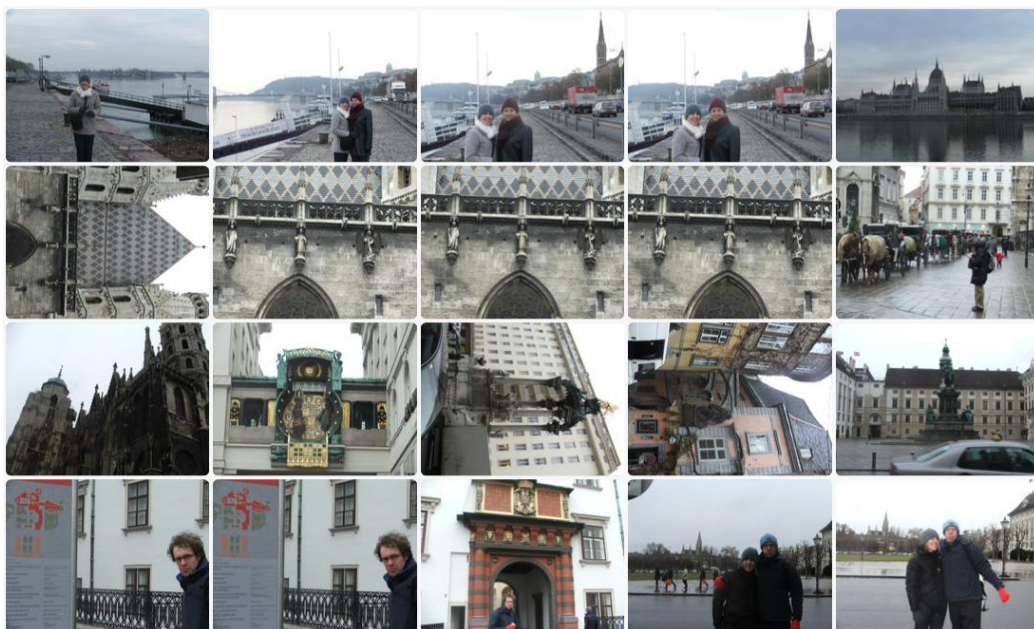
In summary, Ruth's life is a testament to her adventurous spirit, dedication to education, and commitment to personal growth. Whether she is exploring new destinations, teaching and inspiring young minds, or taking on thrilling adventures, Ruth embodies a zest for life that serves as an inspiration to all those fortunate enough to know her.

One of the highlights of their trip was the visit to the Hungarian Parliament Building, an architectural masterpiece that stood as a symbol of the city's grandeur. The intricate details of the neo-Gothic façade left them in awe, and they ventured inside to admire the ornate interiors adorned with gold accents and stunning frescoes. They also explored the historic Buda Castle, perched on a hill overlooking the Danube River, where they were rewarded with panoramic views of the city and its breathtaking bridges.

The trio immersed themselves in Budapest's rich cultural scene, attending classical music concerts in opulent concert halls and sampling traditional Hungarian cuisine in cozy, family-owned restaurants. They savoured hearty dishes such as goulash, paprikash, and chimney cakes, savouring the flavours that reflected the country's culinary heritage.

As they delved deeper into Budapest's history, they paid a visit to the haunting House of Terror Museum, a poignant reminder of the city's turbulent past under communist rule. The exhibits and stories shared within its walls transported them back in time, offering a glimpse into the struggles and resilience of the Hungarian people.

Throughout their journey, Shem, Rachel, and Ruth forged lasting memories, immersing themselves in the rich tapestry of Budapest's culture and history. The extreme cold served as a reminder of their resilience and determination to explore every corner of the city, undeterred by the frosty temperatures. Together, they experienced the charm and allure of a once communist country, discovering the beauty that had emerged from its tumultuous past. Their time in Budapest became a testament to their shared curiosity and love for travel, solidifying their bond and leaving them with a deep appreciation for the vibrant spirit of the city and its people.



These travel experiences allowed Rachel and Shem to expand their horizons, immerse themselves in different cultures, and create precious moments together. Each destination offered unique opportunities for adventure, relaxation, and exploration, further enriching their understanding of the world and forging lifelong memories.

During their time in Scotland, Rachel and Shem had the joy of hosting their respective parents for memorable visits. Both sets of parents had the opportunity to explore the beautiful Scottish landscape and create lasting memories together.

First, Ross and Diane, Rachel's parents, came over and joined them for a summer tour of Scotland. They embarked on a journey through the stunning Scottish countryside, visiting picturesque locations and immersing themselves in the rich history and culture of the country. The tour allowed them to bond as a family and share in the beauty of Scotland's landscapes and landmarks.



Later, Ray and Judy, Shem's parents, also had the chance to visit Scotland and embark on their own tour. Exploring the scenic wonders and historical sites, they experienced the unique charm and hospitality of the Scottish people.

One evening stood out during Ray and Judy's visit when a booking mistake led them to share a bedroom. This unexpected turn of events provided some humorous moments, with Ray's flatulence adding a touch of comedy to the situation. Despite Judy's potential dismay, the evening became a light-hearted memory that the family would fondly recall in the years to come.

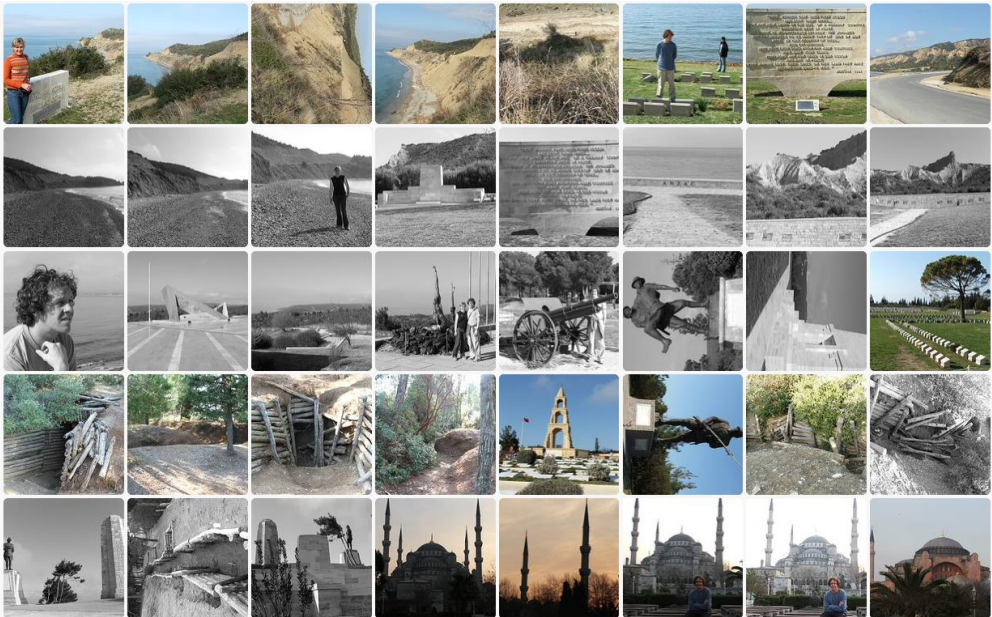
Shem and Rachel embarked on an unforgettable journey to Turkey, a country rich in history and culture. Their adventure began with a flight into Istanbul, a bustling metropolis that bridged the divide between Europe and Asia. The city greeted them with a vibrant mix of ancient landmarks and modern marvels. The couple marvelled at the grandeur of the Hagia Sophia, explored the intricate architecture of the Blue Mosque, and wandered through the bustling streets of the historic Grand Bazaar. The vibrant energy and diverse tapestry of Istanbul set the stage for their Turkish exploration.

After their time in Istanbul, Shem and Rachel took a connecting flight to Izmir, a city on the western coast of Turkey. From there, they embarked on a scenic coastal journey by bus, a mode of transport that allowed them to immerse themselves in the stunning landscapes and rich cultural heritage of the region. As they gazed out of the bus window, they were captivated by the breathtaking views of the Aegean Sea, with its azure waters stretching out to the horizon.

One of the significant stops along their coastal route was Gallipoli, a place of great historical significance. It was here that New Zealand troops, alongside their Australian allies, made their fateful landing during the First World War. As Shem and Rachel walked the solemn grounds of the Gallipoli Peninsula, they felt a deep sense of reverence for the brave soldiers who had fought and

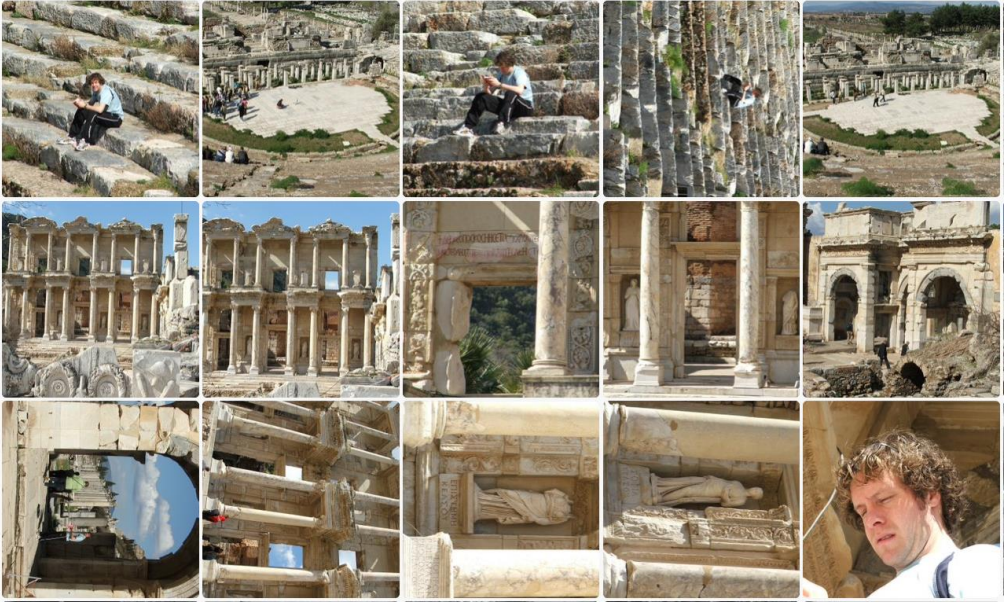
sacrificed their lives in the face of unimaginable adversity. The couple paid their respects at the memorials and took a moment of silence to reflect on the profound impact of war.

During their exploration, Rachel received a poignant memento—a bullet found by a guard at Gallipoli. This small but powerful artifact symbolized the connection they felt to the courageous soldiers who had fought on that very soil. However, carrying the bullet became a source of anxiety for Rachel whenever they passed through airport security. The thought of the bullet being discovered in her bag filled her with a mixture of fear and trepidation. Nevertheless, she held onto it as a tangible reminder of their journey and the enduring legacy of those who had come before.



As they continued their travels, Shem and Rachel made their way to Ephesus, an ancient city steeped in biblical history. Walking through the well-preserved ruins, they were transported back in time to a place where emperors, philosophers, and ordinary citizens once roamed. They marveled

at the majestic Library of Celsus, admired the intricate details of the Great Theater, and pondered the significance of the Temple of Artemis, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. Standing amidst the remnants of this storied city, they felt a profound connection to the past and a deep appreciation for the enduring legacy of human civilization.



Amidst their cultural explorations, Shem and Rachel sought out unique experiences to immerse themselves in Turkish traditions. They embraced the opportunity to partake in a traditional Turkish bath, a ritual known for its cleansing and rejuvenating effects. As hot water cascaded over their heads, they surrendered themselves to the therapeutic warmth, allowing the stresses of their journey to melt away. The sensation of being enveloped by steam and the skilled hands of the bath attendants left them feeling refreshed and invigorated.

In a moment of daring, Shem decided to take part in a traditional Turkish shave. Entrusting his grooming to a local barber, he found himself in a surreal

and slightly nerve-wracking situation. With a blade poised at his neck, Shem couldn't help but feel a mix of excitement and apprehension. The skilled barber navigated the contours of his face, expertly wielding the blade with precision. As the shave progressed, Shem couldn't help but marvel at the closeness of the shave, though it left his skin feeling a bit tender. The experience served as a testament to the craftsmanship and attention to detail that Turkish barbers were renowned for.



During their time in Scotland Shem watched a TV documentary about the Marathon des Sables. This 250km running race across the Sahara Desert is considered one of the toughest races on the planet. Shem took part in the 26<sup>th</sup> edition. Below is his diary.

*On the 7th April 730 runners from around the world gathered at the small Moroccan town of Ait Saadane. Their destination was a collection of 100 Berber tents 9km to the east, and the start of the 2006 Marathon Des Sables. In the midst of them was me, Shem Banbury, runner number 483, fulfilling a 15-month goal of completing the Marathon Des Sables.*

*Since its creation the Marathon des Sables has been a team or individual endurance race of around 220km. It is the world's premier race of this type and proudly carries the tag as the world's toughest footrace. The race is spread over 7 days and in 2006 was made up of 6 stages between 12 and 72 kilometres including one night stage.*

*The race was set up by Frenchman Patrick Bauer who in 1984, at the age of 28, set himself the personal challenge of crossing the Sahara by foot. Surviving on limited food and water and having to travel 300km challenged and inspired him so much that he wanted people to have the opportunity to experience something similar. Therefore, he designed the MDS; a sporting event that required competitors to master their own bodies and challenge themselves to the extreme. Added to that was the mystery of the desert and both fear and apprehension that this vast land generates.*

*"For the finishing touch I added just a hint of adventure by introducing the notion of becoming a voluntary castaway. So, each person prepares his expedition by calculating, testing the weight, balancing the load, learning to ration, to control one's nerves, to live through the psychological aspect of the event as it's the head that drives the rest of the body on. Either you crake up or you transcend yourself." Patrick Bauer – 1985*

*The first race was held in 1986 with only 21 competitors and has steadily grown into a huge international event. Today the event attracts over 700 competitors and is followed by thousands worldwide.*



Upon arriving at camp, the first job is to find yourself a tent. I was attracted by an Irish flag fluttering in the breeze and with one place left, I filled the 8-member quota. Tent number 86 was a superb mixture of nationalities, ages, sizes, snorers and characters. We had the oldest British runner in 63-year-old Brian and the youngest runner in 19-year-old Ed. Add to the mix was Team Odyssey comprising of barrister Mike, Englishman Paul and American George. The final two members were the two characters of the tent. Cork born Fergal McCarthy and Mahmood. Fergal was a laugh and despite contracting every disease known to man and having to have surgery in the desert, he managed to see the funny side to everything. Mahmood was the man with everything in our tent. No item was too heavy for his pack and no food too exotic for him to carry.



The 8th of April was registration day. Competitors are given a registration time and must show that they have the required equipment and the minimum of 2000 calories a day. My time was set for the afternoon, so I had the morning to organise and repack

*any items I thought necessary. Registration managed to go without a hitch, although the French organisers were a little annoyed my ECG was a photocopy and not an original. The process also involves the collection of your survival kit consisting of a flare and salt tablets. Finally, as the final act of your isolation you are required to hand your suitcase into the organisers. From then on for the next 8 days you are limited to the clothes you are wearing, the food in your pack and the ration of 9L of water a day.*

*Prior to the beginning of the race on the 9th April the main talking point in tent 86 was the stat of Fergal's back. Not long after arriving at camp a cyst in Fergal's back started to play up and inflame. He went to the doctor who gladly told him that he would have to cut the cyst out before the race. As you could imagine Fergal was a little apprehensive as he set off to the doctors the night before the race. Apparently, the doctor cut two slices with the scalpel and then expressed the puss out. Unfortunately, I was the designated as tent 86 House surgeon and was required to strap Fergal every morning before the start of each stage.*

### **STAGE 1 – 28km - AIT SAADANE to RICH MERZOUG**

*Usually, the first stage is shorter to help competitors acclimatise to the conditions. However, this year the organisers set the stage at an unusually long distance of 28km.*

*Initially I was feeling confident about the race. My training had been excellent, and I was the fittest I have ever been and felt I could do well in the race. Over the 8 weeks preceding the race I had averaged around 90km a week with a pack and had spent hours organising my equipment and food to ensure it was perfect.*

*Like all sport events there was plenty of nervous energy on the start line. Competitors looking at each other, checking other people's equipment and generally just waiting for the event to start.*

*Finally, after a detailed pre stage briefing the gun went off at 9:00am and the race began. The initial 5km were easy as we made our way along loose sand and small rocks. My plan was to take it easy on the first day by jogging and walking most of the course. However, any thoughts of a fast pace were quickly dispatched as the course*

soon followed a dried-out wadi (river) with large rocks and difficult terrain. The first CP (Check Point) at 12.5km seemed a long way away as I was forced to walk in the wadi.

After about 2 hours I finally made it to CP1 and carried out what was to become the usual process. Collect my ration of 1.5L of water, fill up my water bottles, take 2 salt tablets, treat any blisters and move on. My initial plans were to spend as little time as possible at each CP, however, as the race developed each CP was a huge relief and I valued the time to rest and recuperate.

The second leg of stage one was to have a lasting impression on me. The first 4km were easy and I felt good enough to break into a fast run. But the terrain soon changed and within 30 minutes I found myself on all fours struggling up a huge sand mountain. For me this was when the race changed. No longer was this a running race, or an adventure, it had turned into survival and my only goal was to complete the race.



*My training with Gurney Gears from New Zealand had been excellent but my Scottish preparation was found wanting on the first day. The heat was extreme and the terrain brutal. The way your body reacts to these conditions is almost impossible to gauge if you have not been in this kind of environment.*

*I staggered to the top of the sand hill and found about 50 other people laying around on the top. At least I wasn't the only person struggling. I managed to get a photo from one of the marshals and decided the best option was to just carry on.*

*The terrain to CP 2 was spectacular as rugged sand peaks rose out of the sand. However, I was in no mood to admire the view. I managed to hook up with a couple of British guys who had decided to walk to the next CP. My only option was to walk with them as we followed the rocky ridge line to the CP. By now the terrain had turned and we were walking on large rocks which I found really hard on my feet. The constant rubbing and twisting mixed with sweat and sand was the perfect ingredients for blisters.*

*By the time I arrived at CP2 my spirits had been raised slightly and I was keen to push on. I filled my water bottles and didn't even look at my feet although I knew I had large blisters on the heels of both feet. From CP 2 I only had about 8km to travel and in true MDS comradeship I met up with a Chloe, a British girl living in Hong Kong. Her and her husband were both doing the race and in a strange coincidence, they know the parents of one of the pupils in my class back at Belhaven Hill. It is amazing how the world is so small.*

*With only about 3km of the stage to go I had my first scary experience of the MDS. With the camp in sight there were two runners about 40m in front of us and they seemed to be running freely. Then suddenly the guy in the left just collapsed on to the ground. We ran to his help, and it was clear that he was in a bad way, suffering for dehydration and unable to talk. His friend stayed with him as I ran the final 3km to the finish line to alert the marshals who went to his rescue in the 4WD.*





*That evening I was just happy to finish and get the first stage out of the way. I collected my nightly ration of 4.5L of water and then headed to Hotel 86. I managed to have a good rest and spend the time relaxing and assessing my feet. Unfortunately, they were in a bad way. I had 2 large blisters on the heels and several smaller ones starting around the toes. I decided the best option was to go to the dreaded and feared Dr Trotters, the onsite doctors. Fortunately, the experience wasn't as bad as I thought. In the past the doctors cut the blister open, removing all the skin, exposing the flesh and then they clean the wound. This year the process seemed slightly different. The blister is pierced in two separate places and all the fluid carefully removed. Then comes the pain. Iodine is slowly squeezed into the wound through the small piercings and exposed to the raw flesh. The pain lasts for a minute and is not the most enjoyable experience. To take my mind off the pain I would think about a saying I tell my class and cross-country runners at Belhaven.*

*"Pain is a weakness of the mind".*

*Finally, the blister is left to dry overnight and then covered for the next stage the following morning.*

## **STAGE 2 -35km - RICH MERZOUG to MA'DER EL KEBIR**

*The second stage course began by running up a large mountain consisting long steep climb on a narrow track. The chances of passing on that section of the race would be slim. My plan was to run fast from the start and look to get into a good position before the mountain. Following the mountain, I would run to CP1 and then run/walk for the remainder of the stage.*

*I felt good in the morning and went out hard and as expected the field slowed to a walk over the mountain. Following the mountain there was a 7km salt plain leading to the first checkpoint. At this stage I was feeling great and pushed on, passing a number of competitors.*

*At CP I stopped had a drink and checked my blisters from yesterday. They seemed okay but I could feel them beginning to rub with each stride. The leg following CP2*

*was for me the hardest of the race. It is amazing how quickly your confidence and enjoyment is shattered in the desert. This stage included a large section of sand dunes and I found that these really sapped any energy that I had in my legs. I am not the best walker in the world, and I found I was being passed regularly as stronger walkers flourished in the dunes. The effect of this on your mind is something I didn't expected and halfway to CP2 I was in a bad way. My blisters were sore and rubbing and mentally the sight of people continually passing me was beginning to have an effect. I was forced to stop about 3km from the CP and check my blisters. After adjusting my socks, I pushed on those final 3km seemed to just last for ever.*

*Finally, I made it to CP 2, took my salt tablets and dived for cover in one of the Berber tents. At this stage the temperature was hovering at about 45 and as the afternoon wore on the wind was beginning to send sand everywhere. I quickly tended to my feet, put on my goggles and covered my face with my buff and set off before the sandstorm really started to bite.*

*After about 500m though the wind was howling, and visibility had dropped I remember feeling a little apprehensive at this point as the course just seemed to vanish into the sandstorm. With nobody around I decided to head back to CP2 and take shelter. Fortunately, on the way back I found a walker coming my way. Eye contact was made, no words were spoken as I turned and walked beside them. The strange thing was I had no idea if it was a man or woman or their nationality as we were both covered from top to tale to avoid the sand.*

*We walked together for a while, but I soon pulled away and decided to put on my MP3 player and just try and plough through the dunes and the sandstorm. At places you could see about 50m in front of you and at other times you couldn't see more than a few meters, so you had to stop and wait for the sand to clear. With Green Day blaring in my ears, I found the experience rather strange and soon my blisters were back into the groove, and I started to make some headway. The last 5km to the final CP and home for the evening was like a continual wreckage. People were lying down or resting from the sand every 200m. The thing about the sand is that it causes you to lose all perception of distance. The CP could be only 500m away but you are unable*



*to see it so you feel like stopping. Fortunately, I managed to keep things right and complete the second stage in 5:45.*

*However, when I returned to tent 86 I found that both Paul and George had been forced to withdraw. Paul had become sick on the first mountain and had lost too much time to recover.*

*I felt so sorry for both Paul and George after so much training and effort I would be devastated to be in their shoes. In true grit the boys decided to stay on in the camp and their moral and support over remain stages was crucial to the rest of our team completing the race.*



### **STAGE 3 – 38km MA'DER EL KEBIR to MAHARCH**

*Stage 3 was to prove to be the toughest stage in the 2006 race. Following the relative success of my plan yesterday I decided to try and follow the same technique of running to the first checkpoint and then walking the remainder.*

*The first leg to CP was perfect desert running conditions and easier than a lot of the terrain that we had covered previously. I ran well and made it to CP comfortably so quickly filled my water bottles, took a photo and continued running. After about 3km of salt plain the ground became sand and once again the desert turned my confidence into misery in a matter of minutes. What lay in front was a long sandy slope that lasted for perhaps 5km. My only recollection of this part of the race was having the thought "what on earth am I do here". Apparently, everyone has this thought at some stage and for me this occurred here. Strange things go through your mind in the*

*desert, but I felt that if I just continued and made it to CP2 I would be okay. In the back of my mind however was the knowledge that this CP was positioned on top of a large mountain. As the sand slope continued the mountains around seem to open up and as we neared CP2 the views were exceptional. The final kick up the mountain was brutal. I was in a line of about 6 runners each one close enough to put their foot straight into the hole that was just left by the previous person, this technique seemed to avoid your entire foot sinking into the sand dune. It was like a 6-man bobsled team walking up a sand dune.*

*At the CP2 I had to check my blisters again which were painful, swollen and very attractive to the hundreds of flies in the area. I stopped for a while and admired the view. There was a strange feeling amongst the competitors at the top of the mountain. The vistas were incredible and towards the west you could make out a tiny and trail of the 300 or so runners that had just reached the sand and were embarking on their own mini torture as they made their way to the check point.*

*After the rest I was feeling reasonable fresh and once again tried to jog as much as I could. There was a tricky mountain ridge and descent to negotiate, and one had to be careful with footing and balance. The next leg was between CP2 and CP3 and became known as the leg that really defined the 2006 MDS. The road map we were given didn't really give you a picture of the distance and terrain that was included. Following our descent off the mountain there was a long salt plain, and this was one of the only times I really felt the heat. There was stillness in the air and the heat seemed to just rise off the rocks and hit you in waves. The thing I remember about this stage and the comment from a lot of the competitors was the lack of water. Although the stage was only 12.5km due to the three ridges and the two long salt planes the stage was more like a 20km stage which is far too long for only 1.5L of water. Apparently, there were a total of 5 flares set off in this stage, four people had to be airlifted out and numerous people dropped out due to dehydration and exhaustion. One of the interesting stories I heard of was about a guy who was about 3km from the CP3 and walking along the final salt plane with the CP in sight. A marshal 4WD came by and he seemed to be okay and was running well. The marshal 4WD*

*continued to the CP and then turned around for another run. They came to the same man again and enquired about how he was. He once again replied that he was running fine. The marshals thought this was strange as he was sitting on the ground. He was promptly taken on board and taken to a doctor in his delirious state.*

*My stay at CP3 was short as I met up with Will another English in Hong Kong. We had been in contact before the race, and it was nice to walk and talk with someone for the final 4km. Halfway along the final route we came upon a couple of water wells. Although we didn't drink the water, we delighted ourselves with a mini shower and the sensation was fantastic. Never had water down the back felt so cool and refreshing.*



*That night back at the camp was a horror show for me and without doubt the worst night of the race and perhaps life. After settling down and resting for an hour I went across to Dr Trotters for them to have a look at my feet. It took a while to be seen but I was finally seen to by a doctor. However, I was positioned right beside the communications table. About half through my foot examination a hush came across the entire medical tent. It turned out that one of the Irish runners who had been airlifted out between CP2 and CP3 was in such a bad state he had to be put into a coma. As I sat with both legs*

*stretch out the English organiser was trying to get through to the Irish family. With pain in feet as Iodine was pumped into my wounds, I had to listen to the lady explain to the family that their son was in a critical condition and had been airlifted to France and the situation was to be treated as extremely serious. It was rather a stressful time for all involved and the silence in the tent added to the situation and to the thoughts going through people's heads.*

*That night I didn't sleep well at all and had stomach bug. I woke up a couple of times to people crying in nearby tents and couldn't sleep much at all. The MDS is a race that exposes every aspect of who you are. In those lonely hours with only your*

*thoughts you mind can become a dangerous weapon either for you or against you. Unfortunately, that evening it was working against me. I woke up the next morning and to my relief I managed to pass a reasonably solid motion. Which was a relief because if you have the runs in the desert, you are a goner. Following my successful motion, the email lady came around and handed out some emails from the day before.*

*It was always funny when the emails came around. The tent which is usually alive with people talking suddenly becomes quiet and people retreat into their own little worlds. That morning my emails nearly destroyed me. I felt alone, totally exposed, sick and scared death about the prospect of having to cover some 57km across the Sahara Desert. It is out in the desert when you are broken that you realise the most important thing is people and to not have them near when you need them is one of the hardest things in life.*



*The tag as the world's toughest footrace has been earned by the Marathon des Sables and after day three, I was in no mood to argue. In the third year of the race, French man Jean-Luc Provence aged 28 tragically died on the second day due to a heart attack caused by dehydration. This has been the only fatality in the event so far. However,*

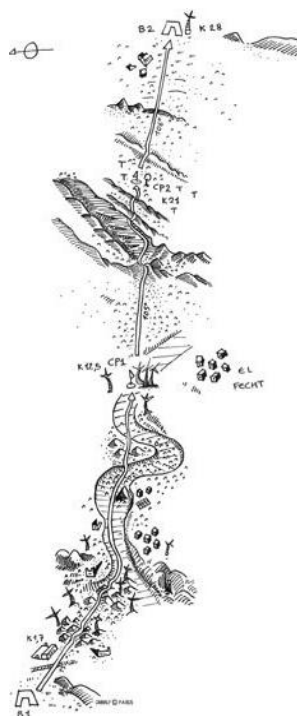
*every year the dropout rate is high as competitors must complete the equivalent of 6 marathons in 7 days in searing heat, high humidity and rugged terrain. At the conclusion of the 3rd stage over 130 people had already abandoned the 2006 race. Considering that around 50 failed to finish the previous year this was a huge number and a worry to all both the organisers and the competitors.*

#### **STAGE 4 – 72km (Revised to 57km) - MAHARCH to JEBEL EL MRAIER**

*The news for the competitors at the start of Stage 4 was excellent. Due to the high rate of abandonment's so far in the race and the severe heat conditions the 4th stage was reduced from 72km to 57km and more water was to be given out. To be honest the increased water allowance was excellent, but I know that many competitors were not entirely happy with the reduction in the distance. Personally, after the experience of the night before all my prayers had been answered!!!*

*Due to my mental state, I team up with Fergal from tent 86 and we agreed to walk together for this stage and just try and get through. Fergal had had a difficult time so far in the race. Following the removal of the cyst at the top of his back he had become sick during Stage 2 and required a drip at one of the checkpoints. He had made it home on day 2 20min before the cut off time. He was slowly getting better but just wanted to get this big one out of the road. Our plan was simple. Walk to check point 4 and have some dinner and then carry on into the night.*

*Our plan worked well and upon reflection the race became easier from this point on. The increase in water was a help but the real reason was that the terrain became more runner friendly, and the temperatures dropped into the mid 30 due to cloud cover. In hindsight I am sure that the organisers were a little annoyed that they cut the*



*length down, however safety is the most important aspect in a race of this kind.*

*Working with Fergal was both a blessing and a curse. His is a fantastic guy and we got on very well. It was great to talk to someone and this made the distance seem less. However, I am not a walker, in fact I hate walking so found it a constant battle just to keep up with Fergal. The good thing was that mentally we both felt better as the stage went on. We were walking fast and were passed by very few people which helps with the confidence.*

*It is amazing what you talk about out in the desert and one interesting conversation we had was based around the wind. I casually noted that I was happy that the wind was on our backs rather than into our face and for the next few kilometres Fergal tried to recite a famous Gaelic blessing. It wasn't until we arrived back home that I received an email with the whole blessing.*

*May the road rise to meet you.*

*May the wind be always at your back.*

*May the sunshine warm upon your face; the rains fall soft upon your fields and until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of His hand.*



*We made it safely to check point 4 by about 5pm and decided to stop for dinner. In the end we enjoyed the rest and spent time just watch the sun drop and the night begin to take hold. Stage 4 is also the night stage and we still had about 19km to go when the sun finally departed. To help you navigate fluorescent sticks are given to every competitor and markers are placed every 500m. I enjoyed the night stage and found the cooler temperatures easier on the body.*

*Fergal and I finally completed the stage at about 2am with both Paul and George from tent 86 at the finish line to welcome us home. Fantastic!!! The great thing was that the next day was a day off. Many competitors decide to break the stage up and spend a night exposed in the dunes but for those that push on is the reward of a rest day. Mentally my confidence had changed once more. Following the 57km stage I was ecstatic and sure that I would finish the race. I had come this far; my body was getting stronger and although I still had to negotiate a marathon the next day the general mood amongst the competitors was that the hardest part was past.*

*It was about day four that I regretted several things about my pack and the food I had bought. Day after day eating the same thing just gets boring and disgusting. For the past 2 years I have eaten oats, sunflower seeds and raisins for breakfast. However, three days into this race I was sick to death of it. I also found the evening meals frustrating and although reasonably yummy before the race after three days whether it was the shepherd's pie, the lamb pilaf or the chicken in noodles they all tasted the same. I also ran into a few problems with my kit on day four. The first 3 days of the race were incredibly hot and even the evenings were hot. I had been told the temperature would drop to about zero and had bought a thermal top. On day 3 to help get through the next day and lighten the load I threw out my thermal top and white Tyvek suit. Well as you can imagine with the cooler day the night temperatures also dropped and from that point on I wished for my zebra striped thermal.*

#### **STAGE 5 – 42.2km - JEBEL EL MRAIER to KOURCI DIAL ZAID**

*Stage 5 is traditionally marathon day on the Marathon des Sables. With the last stage only being 12km long the general feeling was that this was the last real test in this*

*year's race. The pace today was hot from the start and obviously people wanted to put forward a good time in the marathon stage. Fergal and I planned to revert to the tried and tested idea of running hard at the start and walking the rest. With lighter packs and only handfuls of food left, we cracked along nicely and arrived at the first CP in a very fast 1:10. Fergal rushed me through the checkpoint and within minutes we were on the road again. There was a cool wind blowing which had helped us for most of the first leg but following CP1 the course direction changed, and we found ourselves running into the teeth of the increasing wind. Fergal and I joined with a couple of Spaniards and an Italian runner, and we formed a chain where each person lead for 3 minutes and then joined the back of the group. It felt like the Tour de France. The speed was fast, and I found my heart rate increasing as I pushed to stay with the group. Finally, the pace became too much, and I was dropped but at least I had managed to bank a quick 5km into the second leg. I ran and walked to CP2 but by now my feet were in a bad way and very painful. I stopped for a while and changed my socks, which really undid all of the quick running earlier in the morning. Fortunately, I met up with Charlie Sykes and ran with him for a while until I met back up with Fergal. He had continued with the Tour de France group and had done well but was now planning to walk the rest. I tucked in beside him and decided to walk with him until the end. We reached CP4 comfortably and with only a small stage of 3km we ran quickly to the finish of the stage. Running across the line to complete the marathon stage was truly amazing. At that point I knew that I had conquered the Marathon des Sables and I had goose bumps as I ran across the line.*

*That night the entire camp was in party mood. There was a concert put on by the organisers although I was so knackered that I could only just lie in my bed and listen to the music. The race had taken its toll on my body. My feet were butchered and I counted 16 blisters between the two feet. My legs were shattered, and the muscles were really beginning to feel the pain of each movement. They weren't cramping up they just had nothing left in them. Like many other competitors I had developed the Sahara shuffle which is a old man slides as my only way around the camp. However, it was mentally that I was the most exhausted. The race is a roller coaster of emotions and thoughts. One minute you can be feeling high as kite and confident of your pace*



*and position, then the next minute the desert reduces you to tears and you wonder how you can complete the next 4km. Mentally I was drained and just looking forward to seeing my lovely wife Rachel again.*

*The final night was a night to reflect on the race and the achievement of running 220km across the Sahara Desert. Without doubt the things that will stay in my mind are the enjoyable times spent with the tent 86. I will always remember Mike and his complaining. We would often hold bets about what his first complaint would be when he arrived back in camp. Usually it was his back, although once back into the tent the subject of the dreaded pubic hair between his head would become this focus. I felt sorry for Mike as a simple procedure would be to go down and cut things with a pair of scissors. However, no one in the tent was keen to venture down into those regions and the danger of a DIY job always meant it was left on the 'to do' list.*

*Young Ed was also lots of fun. He performed extremely well to beat his mother who was also running the race considering he did the entire race on a diet of pepperoni sticks.*

*Another tent mate who always impressed as Brian. At 63 the Marathon Des Sables is a massive undertaking, and he completed the race in fine form and not a blister to his name.*

### **Stage 6 – 12km - KOURCI DIAL ZAID to MERZOUGA**

*The final stage was just a stroll in the park and as you could imagine the feeling amongst the competitors was electric. I stood at the start line knowing that in only 12km this whole adventure would be over.*

*Our plan this morning was simple. We would run as fast as possible to the sand dunes which were 8km and then savour the final 4km with a well-deserved walk. We could have run the last 4 km but at this stage position and time were not important, we were keen to enjoy the dunes for the last time and enjoy the moment, as it may never come again.*

The first 8km were fast and flat and it was nice to be able to run with some speed. I pushed hard enjoying the chance to pass a few competitors and we made it to the dunes in 40 minutes. We then decided to walk and although we were passed by hundreds of runners, we enjoyed the walk. The final 1km were memorable. Large crowds coming out into the dunes to cheer every runner on loved ones and seeing the finishing line as we rose over our final dune was a blessing. Crossing the finish line was not the euphoria that one might expect. Yes, there was excitement and relief, but I think I was more excited at the end of the marathon stage as I then knew I had made it.

Completion of the race meant getting my medal and importantly the traditional hug from organise Patrick Bauer. Although not the greatest job he prides himself on trying to congratulate every runner as they cross the line. As you could imagine with no shower for 9 days this is not the most pleasant experience.

For those interested in positions and speed I end up in 346th position out of the 730 starters. Overall, I was happy with this as after the third day I just wanted the thing to finish. However, I learnt so much during the race I am sure that if I tried again, I would do much better. Perhaps I will give it a go again in a few years' time.

The Marathon des Sables is a fantastic race. It challenges every level of athlete and the secret to its success is that it enables every person, every average person the chance to do something special.

### Shem Banbury 483

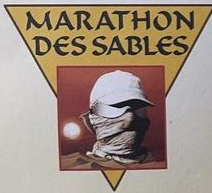
345	505	SOPWITH	Bean	GB	F	H1	42H18'32"	25H04'31"
346	483	BANBURY	Shem	NZ	H	---	42H20'55"	25H06'54"
347	22	GHAZALI	Dalila	MAR	F	---	42H21'57"	25H07'56"
348	25	DJEBLI	Nezha	MAR	F	F1	42H24'48"	25H10'47"
349	289	GORDON	Aran	US	H	F1	42H24'58"	25H10'57"
350	381	ALDECOA	Antonio	ES	H	H1	42H26'27"	25H12'26"

Overall	346	42H21'57"	25H07'56"	5,00
stage 1	383	04H49'47"	2H46'03"	5,8
stage 2	331	06H40'18"	3H37'18"	5,25
stage 3	317	07H59'15"	4H48'17"	4,76
stage 4	386	14H09'30"	9H16'05"	4,03
stage 5	360	07H12'10"	3H56'09"	5,86
stage 6	389	01H30'57"	0H47'22"	7,78

*It is funny to think of it this way, but something deep inside didn't really want the final day to come. I think every competitor feels the same. A gladness in finishing but a sadness in leaving the desert. Perhaps the best person to sum up one's feelings is Patrick Bauer himself and his words at the end of his ordeal are like the way I felt on that last morning.*

*I knew that the end was nigh, and I was very happy. My backpack was empty, but I felt very emotional. I couldn't really convince myself that it was the end; that there was no more kilometres left. It was a bizarre sensation. I was really very happy to have arrived but deep down inside I was invaded by a deep sadness knowing that I would no longer leave my footprints in this place that I had learned to love. I cast a last look over the sands and then returned to civilisation.*

21<sup>e/st</sup>



ATLANTIDE ORGANISATION Internationale,  
organisateur du 21<sup>ème</sup> MARATHON DES SABLES,  
ATLANTIDE ORGANISATION Internationale,  
organiser of the 21<sup>st</sup> MARATHON DES SABLES,  
qui s'est déroulé du 7 au 17 avril 2006 dans le Sud marocain,  
which took place from 7<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> april 2006 in the southern Morocco,

certifie que **Shem BANBURY**  
certifies that

a participé à cette épreuve d'une distance de 212 km  
en 6 étapes et en autosuffisance alimentaire.  
participated in this foot race with self sufficiency  
over a distance of 212 km in 6 stages.

N° dossard : **483**  
N° dossard

Nationalité : **NZ**  
Nationality

Classement général : **346<sup>ème</sup>** individuel/individual  
General ranking

Directeur de course,  
Race director,  
Patrick BAUER

Départ de course : 731 concurrents  
Departure : 731 competitors

Arrivée de course : 585 concurrents  
Arrival : 585 competitors

Temps : **42H21'57"**  
Time





The summer of 2006 holds a special place in Rachel and Shem's memories as they embarked on an unforgettable holiday in Greece and Italy. Their journey began with a flight to Greece, where they immersed themselves in the stunning beauty of the Greek islands.

During their island-hopping adventure, they encountered a unique situation at one beach where there was no available accommodation. Undeterred, Rachel and Shem decided to purchase a tent and set up camp right on the beachfront, allowing them to fully embrace the carefree and adventurous spirit of their trip.

After their time in Greece, the couple boarded a ferry that took them across the azure waters to the southern region of Italy. For the next four weeks, they embarked on a captivating exploration of Italy, soaking in the rich history, art, and culture of this magnificent country.

Their Italian journey began in Milan, a bustling city known for its fashion and artistic heritage. From there, they embarked on various modes of transportation, including buses and trains, as they made their way to

Florence. In the birthplace of the Renaissance, Rachel and Shem were captivated by the awe-inspiring art and architecture, including visits to renowned landmarks such as the Florence Cathedral and the Uffizi Gallery.

Their Italian adventure culminated in Rome, the eternal city that showcases centuries of history and breathtaking landmarks. Exploring ancient ruins like the Colosseum and the Roman Forum, strolling through the charming streets of Trastevere, and marvelling at the grandeur of St. Peter's Basilica in Vatican City were among the highlights of their time in the capital.

The couple's trip to Egypt holds a special place in their hearts as it allowed them to explore the ancient wonders and immerse themselves in the rich history of the region. Opting for a more independent approach, Rachel and Shem organized their own itinerary, enabling them to create a personalized and memorable experience.



Their adventure began with a flight into Cairo, the vibrant capital of Egypt. They took the time to explore the bustling city, marvelling at iconic landmarks such as the Great Pyramid of Giza, the Sphinx, and the Egyptian Museum, where they encountered ancient artifacts of immense historical significance.

Before making their way back home, Rachel and Shem took the opportunity to have a week-long vacation in the United States. Their journey included visits to iconic landmarks such as the Hoover Dam, experiencing the vibrant atmosphere of Las Vegas, and attending a thrilling baseball game featuring the LA Dodgers. This trip allowed them to create lasting memories and enjoy some of the highlights of American culture before embarking on the next chapter of their lives.





## -DEUTERONOMY -

Upon their return to New Zealand and settling in Thames, Rachel and Shem began their new journey as expectant parents, embracing the joys and challenges that come with starting a family. With Shem's position as a Deputy Principal, they found stability and a sense of belonging in their new community. Thames, known for its tranquil ambiance, provided the ideal backdrop for them to build their family and create a nurturing environment for their growing child.

Shem and Rachel resided at 103 Ash Street in Thames, a two-story wooden house located just north of Thames. Shem worked at Moanataiari School, teaching the Year 7/8 class. Unfortunately, the school did not live up to Shem's expectations. The principal's leadership was disappointing, and the behaviour of the students was vastly different from what Shem had experienced in Scotland.

During his time at the school, Shem faced challenging incidents. In one instance, he had \$3000 worth of fundraising chocolate stolen by one of his students. Additionally, there was an incident where a visiting Education Review Office representative struggled to control the class as two students engaged in a dangerous razor blade fight.

Meanwhile, Rachel made a significant decision in Thames by becoming a part owner of the local pharmacy. Her business skills and dedication proved to be valuable as she took on this new venture. Owning a share in the pharmacy allowed her to contribute to the community and showcase her entrepreneurial abilities.

Despite the difficulties at the school, Rachel's success in the pharmacy business provided a positive aspect to their life in Thames. It demonstrated

her talent and acumen in the business world, adding a sense of fulfilment and accomplishment for both Rachel and Shem.

One of the key reasons that Rachel and Shem had come home to New Zealand was for the birth of their first child. When they arrived in Thames they quickly enrolled in an anti-natal class to prepare themselves for the approaching birth.

It was during one of these classes where an extremely humorous event occurred. Amid the circle of expectant couples, Rachel, 8 months pregnant with Asa, was doing her best to focus on the serious matter at hand – childbirth. Shem, like any concerned partner, was anxious about the upcoming video session, fearing the inevitable awkwardness of seeing intimate moments on screen.

But, as they say, laughter is the best medicine, and that day it was Rachel who served up a hearty dose. It all happened during a particularly light-hearted moment when someone cracked a joke that sent ripples of laughter throughout the room. Rachel, with her infectious sense of humour, couldn't hold it in, and neither could something else.

As she laughed heartily, an unexpected, floor-shaking sound reverberated across the room – a sound that needed no translation - a flatulent symphony of sorts. The whole class froze, eyes widening in a mix of shock and amusement. It was one of those moments when time seemed to stand still, and then, as if on cue, the room erupted into more laughter.

Rachel, with her radiant smile and unflinching sense of humour, simply shrugged and said, "Well, I guess even babies appreciate a good laugh, inside or out!"

After settling into their new home in Thames, a significant moment occurred in Shem's life that would shape his journey as a parent and leave an indelible mark on his memory. Four weeks after their arrival, Rachel and Shem

welcomed their first child, a son named Asa, into the world at Thames Hospital on October 27, 2006.

The birth of Asa brought a mix of excitement and nerves to Shem and Rachel. They eagerly anticipated the arrival of their child, with Shem particularly feeling a mixture of anticipation and apprehension. As the day of delivery approached, Shem's aversion to medical matters added an extra layer of anxiety.

As the momentous day arrived, Rachel and Shem found themselves in the delivery room, surrounded by a team of medical professionals. The birth progressed relatively smoothly, with Rachel's strength and determination guiding her through the process. However, in a surprising turn of events, the nurse who was assisting them was urgently called away, leaving Shem with a decision to make.

In a moment of bravery and love, Shem stepped forward to support his wife and be actively involved in the birth of their child. Overcoming his aversion to medical procedures, he courageously went "down to the business end" and provided the much-needed assistance in the nurse's absence. This unexpected turn of events would forever be etched in Shem's memory, a testament to his unwavering commitment to his family.

From that moment on, Shem's bond with Asa grew stronger with each passing day. He embraced the joys and challenges of fatherhood wholeheartedly, cherishing every milestone and cherishing the precious moments spent with his son. Despite his initial aversion to medical matters, Shem's love for Asa and his dedication to being a supportive father allowed him to overcome his fears and thrive in his role.



Sadly, only few months after the birth of Asa, Shem's Grandad William Knight died peacefully in Christchurch.

Shem's grandfather, Bill, was born on the 19th of August 1923, in the vibrant town of Blenheim. Growing up in a large family, Bill was one of nine siblings, each with their unique personalities and roles within the household. Their names and ages are beautifully chronicled in the pages of the family book, a testament to the bond they shared.

During his early years, Bill lived in Blenheim, immersing himself in the community and forging connections with the people around him. Like many of his generation, his educational journey took an unexpected turn when he left school at the age of thirteen. Detailed accounts in the blue book offer a

glimpse into this pivotal decision, shaping the path that Bill would follow in life.

Employment beckoned, and Bill found himself working at Girlings, a prominent establishment in Blenheim. This experience served as a foundation for his work ethic, instilling in him a sense of responsibility and dedication to his craft.

Fate intervened when Bill crossed paths with another young man named Bill in Wellington. It was during their time at Fort Dorset Trentham military camp that a friendship blossomed, sowing the seeds of camaraderie that would withstand the test of time.

The call to duty came at a young age for Bill, as he joined the army at the tender age of eighteen. At twenty-one, he embarked on a journey overseas, spending two years away from home. The memories of his service left an indelible mark, with his first recollection of Egypt etched vividly in his mind—a "Mad Major" subjecting the troops to a gruelling three-day route march with full packs.

Bill's military service included the Italian campaign, a significant chapter in his life. From Naples to Florence, he experienced the beauty and challenges of wartime Italy. As a skilled and passionate brass player, he sought opportunities to continue his musical journey amidst the chaos. His talent caught the attention of Band Master Dean Goffin, and Bill had the privilege of playing under his guidance in Italy.

After witnessing the unimaginable devastation of Hiroshima as part of J Force, Bill returned to his hometown of Blenheim in 1945 to a heartfelt welcome from family and friends. The war had transformed him, instilling in him a deeper appreciation for life's precious moments and a renewed sense of purpose.

Music continued to be a source of joy and solace for Bill, as he played the tenor horn in the Silver band. His melodies echoed through the community, touching the hearts of those who listened.

In 1947, two years after the war's end, Bill married his war bride, Joyce, embarking on a new chapter of their lives together. They celebrated their honeymoon in Palmerston North, cherishing the precious moments of love and companionship.

Settling in Blenheim for the next decade, Bill and Joyce built their first home on Willryan Ave, becoming the first occupants of the street. The arrival of their daughter, Diane, brought immeasurable joy, fulfilling a long-awaited dream after ten years of anticipation.

Three years later, another miracle unfolded when John entered their lives. Bill's pride and love knew no bounds, evident when he sold their second-hand pram to purchase a brand-new one, symbolizing the boundless hope and love he held for his growing family.

Bill's resourcefulness and determination shone through as he built their first caravan and even a dolls house, despite having no prior experience in carpentry. These projects became treasured symbols of his dedication and the love he poured into his family.

Many cherished family holidays were spent in the rounded caravan, with its little windows and cozy bunks. Laughter and shared memories filled their days, creating a tapestry of experiences that would forever bind them together.

A familiar sight awaited Diane and John as they eagerly waited at the gate, their hearts filled with anticipation, to greet their beloved father. Bill's presence brought a sense of warmth and security, driving them up the driveway with a cheerful toot of the horn. Those simple moments etched in their memories, a testament to the bond between a father and his children.

Fishing expeditions at Picton Wharf and Lyttelton became treasured traditions, weaving stories of adventure and camaraderie. Bill's love for his family extended beyond mere recreational activities; he took a keen interest in John's rugby and table tennis, even participating in curtain raisers for big rugby matches in the city. His unwavering support and encouragement moulded not only their skills but also their character.



One of Shem's fondest memories of his grandfather was their time spent together in church. William's love for hymns was evident as he enthusiastically sang along with the congregation, expressing his faith through music. During these services, Shem often recalls his grandfather opening a small tin container of pink smokers, a gesture of generosity as he shared these treats with those seated nearby.

Shem fondly remembers the special moments he shared with his grandfather, William Noel Knight, during their time together. Among the cherished memories, one particular adventure stood out—their unforgettable trip to the Gold Coast. Shem and his grandad embarked on an exhilarating roller coaster ride that sent them twisting and turning through the air, laughter filling the air as they held on tight to the thrill of the experience. It was a day of pure joy and bonding, etched into Shem's memory as a testament to the love and connection they shared. Beyond the gardening and the hymns, Shem will always hold dear the image of his grandad's laughter and the excitement they

shared on that roller coaster ride, a testament to the timeless bond between a grandfather and his grandson.



In his personal life, William Knight married Joyce Wilson. They established their home at 17 Willryan Avenue, creating a warm and loving environment for their family. The home became a haven where cherished memories were



made, and the Knight family flourished under the guidance of William and Joyce's loving partnership.

William Noel Knight's legacy lives on through his love for gardening, his musical contributions to the Salvation Army Band, and his steadfast Christian values. He left an indelible impression on his family and those who had the privilege of knowing him, his memory forever cherished as a pillar of faith, generosity, and love.

Within the tapestry of Shem's life, it is now time to recognise , his beloved Nana, Joyce Wilson. Born on the 14th of July 1926, at St Helen's Hospital in Auckland, she entered the world amidst a backdrop of hope and adversity.

Emily's father, John Wilson, a labourer hailing from Devonport in Auckland, was 61 years old when she was born. Her mother, Emily Wilson, a woman of strength from Mangonui, was 42 years old. Joyce was the youngest of their five children, a gentle soul whose spirit would shine brightly despite the challenges she faced.

At the tender age of four, Joyce's life took an unforeseen turn as she moved from the Hamilton Children's Home to the Grange, a girls' home in Auckland. Though separated from her family, she fondly recalled her mother's visits, treasuring memories of him taking her to town and gifting her a cherished doll. These moments of connection formed the foundation of her love and longing for familial bonds.

Joyce's mother worked diligently, finding employment on farms and in boarding houses to support their family. By the age of eight, Joyce reunited with her mother, reminiscing about their time living in a spacious house where her mother undertook washing and ironing. Emily herself played a role in this endeavour, diligently delivering the laundered clothes to their neighbours, a responsibility that cultivated a sense of responsibility and community within her young heart.

However, life within the walls of their home was marred by a tumultuous existence. Joyce's mother, burdened by the weight of alcohol, often succumbed to its grip, subjecting her to acts of violence. These experiences shaped Joyce's resolve at a tender age, fostering a determination not to follow in her mother's footsteps. In her own words, she vowed not to drink alcohol, acknowledging the destructive path it had forged within her own family. Joyce endured moments of pain, enduring the physical and emotional scars inflicted upon her, strengthening her spirit for the journey that lay ahead.

Joyce's education, unfortunately, became a casualty of the turbulent circumstances surrounding her upbringing. Irregular attendance at school was a consequence of the challenges she faced within her home. She vividly recalled sitting on the edge of a step, her spirit broken as she endured the painful consequences of high-heel shoes thrashing against her young body. However, fate would intervene, allowing a glimmer of hope to shine through the darkness.

The caring intervention of a teacher, recognizing the signs of abuse, provided a turning point in Joyce's life. The marks upon her body caught their attention, prompting action and an opportunity for change. Yet, her mother's resistance to any form of intervention threatened Joyce's educational journey. The ultimatum cast a shadow of uncertainty, but it did not extinguish her resilience. Joyce left school at what was then Standard 5, equivalent to Year 7 in primary school, propelled by an unwavering determination to carve her own path forward.

Throughout Joyce's trials, the neighbours next door, the Johnsons, emerged as beacons of compassion, ever watchful over her well-being. It was within their caring embrace that Joyce encountered a pivotal decision. The Johnsons, aware of the challenges she faced, offered her the option to return to the girls' home in Auckland, the Grange. This fateful choice would open doors to opportunities and ignite a spark within her heart.

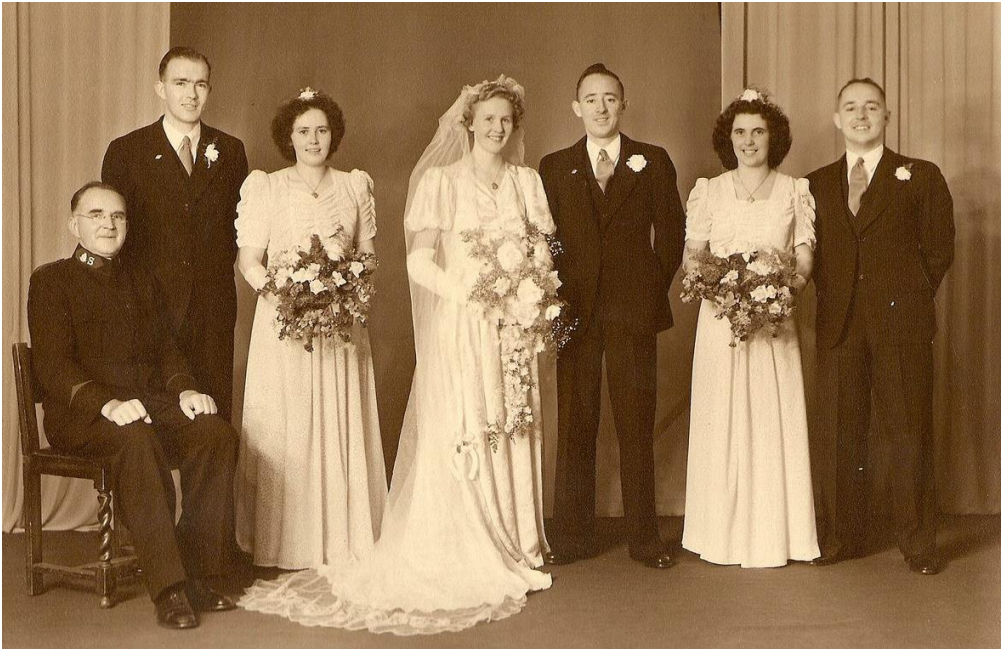
Within the welcoming halls of the Grange, Emily discovered a passion that would shape her life's narrative. She embarked on a journey of sewing, showcasing remarkable talent and meticulous craftsmanship. Her needlework skills became the talk of the town, admired by all who beheld her delicate stitches. Major Blincoe from the Salvation Army recognized her gift and extended an invitation for her to work in a factory. At the tender age of 15, she embarked on a new adventure, catching an overnight train to Wellington, where a Mr. Collins awaited her arrival.

Wellington became the backdrop of Joyce's transformative years. The Collins family, proprietors of a baby shop on Mannings Street, provided her with board and work opportunities. Days were spent honing her skills in the factory, creating beautiful baby gowns and expertly sewing hems on napkins. Friday nights saw her grace the shop's floor, serving customers with warmth and care. During this time, Joyce's journey of faith intertwined with her personal growth, as she found solace and companionship within the walls of the Wellington Citadel.

It was within this spiritual community that Emily's path crossed Jean, Olive and Rene Knight, who worked at the People's Palace. These connections became the foundation of a vibrant social life, with the Salvation Army youth group serving as a hub of community and camaraderie.

Soon Joyce's was introduced to another Knight – William (aka Bill). Their meeting, originating from their shared friendship, but it would set the stage for a love story that would span a lifetime.

On the 29th of March 1947, at the age of 20, Joyce and Bill sealed their bond of love in marriage. Their wedding marked a joyous occasion, a celebration of their union as Bill returned from the war. With Palmerston North serving as the backdrop for their honeymoon, they embarked on a journey that took them to Rotorua and Napier, creating cherished memories along the way. Soon after, they decided to settle in Blenheim, a place they would call home.



During this time, fate intervened, delivering both unexpected news and newfound possibilities. Out of the blue, Joyce received a letter from a lawyer bearing news of her mother's passing. In an unexpected twist, she discovered that her mother had left her an inheritance of 100 pounds. With this unforeseen windfall, Joyce and Bill made the decision to embark on a new chapter, moving to Christchurch. They acquired a section in North Brighton, a place where they would build their home and create a foundation for their family's future.

Growing up in Christchurch, their home was a haven, where joy and laughter resonated within the walls. The neighbourhood provided endless hours of fun and camaraderie with friends, creating memories that would last a lifetime. Sundays were devoted to their faith, as they gathered at the local Baptist church, enveloped in the embrace of their spiritual community.

Holidays became a cherished tradition, where the family – Bill, Joyce, John and Diane - embarked on adventures, both near and far. Timaru and Kaikoura beckoned with their promise of long weekends, and Picton became a destination during Dad's annual two-week leave in January. Special trips to the North Island allowed for reunions with relatives, weaving the tapestry of their extended family into the fabric of their lives.



Every Sunday afternoon, the family's commitment to nurturing family connections came alive. Visiting Bill's siblings for afternoon tea became a beloved tradition, characterized by wagons and trolleys loaded with an array of cream cakes and savoury delights. The bond shared between generations was nourished through these gatherings, forming lasting memories that would carry them through the years.

As a devoted mother and homemaker, Joyce played a vital role in supporting the family's income and ensuring their home was filled with love and care. To contribute to the family's financial stability, she took on evening cleaning jobs at a local post office and later at a flat complex in the city. Her dedication and hard work served as a testament to her commitment to providing for her family.

In an era when many mothers stayed at home, Joyce embraced her role wholeheartedly. She possessed a multitude of skills and talents that benefited her loved ones in countless ways. With her nimble fingers and creative spirit, she became a seamstress extraordinaire, sewing clothes for her children. Every stitch was imbued with love and attention to detail, ensuring that her family was dressed with care and style.

Joyce's culinary skills were a source of delight for the family. From the heartwarming aromas wafting from the kitchen to the delectable dishes served at the table, she nourished both their bodies and their souls. Her mastery in the culinary arts brought warmth and joy to their home, creating a sense of comfort and togetherness.

Despite never having a driver's license, Joyce embraced the opportunities to explore the world beyond their doorstep. When Dad was working, they relied on buses to venture out, and Joyce would occasionally journey into the city. These outings provided moments of excitement and adventure, allowing her to connect with the wider community and create lasting memories with her family.

Joyce's talents extended to the realm of knitting, where she showcased her skills as a master knitter. Her nimble fingers worked their magic, creating beautiful garments that brought warmth and comfort to her loved ones. From jerseys to shawls, each knitted piece was a testament to her love and dedication. Every grandchild and the first of the great-grandchildren received the gift of her knitting, enveloping them in the warmth of her affection.

Beyond her own family, Joyce's compassionate heart extended to those in need. She knitted hundreds of bonnets for the leprosy mission, a testament to her generosity and her desire to make a difference in the lives of others. Together with Dad, she tirelessly worked at fundraising stalls, pouring their efforts into supporting this noble cause.

Joyce's love and care knew no bounds, and her contributions as a mother and homemaker were immeasurable. Her dedication to her family's well-being, her creative talents, and her acts of kindness touched the lives of many. Joyce's legacy lives on through the warmth of her knitted garments, the memories of her delicious meals, and the love that continues to flow through generations.

Upon returning from Scotland, Shem's adventurous spirit led him to seek out new challenges on his home turf. He yearned for a multi-stage running race that would push him to his limits, and that's when he discovered the Kaweka Challenge. This gruelling two-day race, set amidst the breathtaking Kaweka Ranges, tested the endurance and determination of even the most seasoned athletes.

With a burning desire to conquer this ultimate test of strength and stamina, Shem eagerly took on the challenge. On his first attempt, he experienced the sheer brutality of the race, with its unforgiving steep sections that seemed to sap every ounce of energy from his body. However, this setback only fuelled his determination to train harder and come back stronger.

On his second attempt at the Kaweka Challenge, Shem's relentless dedication paid off. Pushing through the pain and exhaustion, he displayed unwavering resolve as he chased down the competitor in front of him, summoning every bit of strength for a victorious sprint to the finish line. Triumphant crossing the 45-kilometer mark, he emerged as the winner of the two-day race, a testament to his grit and tenacity.

The Kaweka Challenge became an annual pilgrimage for Shem, a true test of his physical and mental fortitude. With each subsequent race, he confronted the daunting Mad Dog Hill, a notorious section that haunted his dreams and challenged his willpower. It was a battle against the elements, the unforgiving terrain, and his own limitations. Yet, Shem persevered, pushing his boundaries and achieving personal victories in every step he took.

In 2008, a spark of inspiration ignited within Shem, propelling him towards a year-long adventure that would shape his creativity and strengthen his resilience. It was the year of the first-ever blog challenge—a commitment that would test his consistency, push the boundaries of his self-expression, and open doors to new horizons.





**Marmot Kaweka Challenge - 2007**

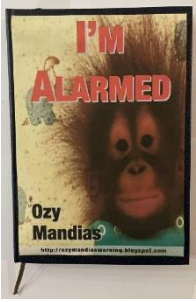
With unwavering determination, Shem embarked on this transformative journey, embracing the power of the written word and the potential it held to connect with a vast online community. Armed with a keyboard and an insatiable thirst for growth, he set out to share his thoughts, experiences, and unique perspectives with the world.

The blog challenge became a creative playground, a virtual canvas where Shem could pour out his heart and mind, weaving stories, capturing moments, and exploring the depths of his soul. Week after week, he diligently crafted and published his writings, allowing his voice to emerge and evolve in the digital realm.

Through this commitment, Shem discovered the joy of connecting with like-minded individuals, forging new friendships across the digital landscape. His words resonated with readers who found solace, inspiration, and a sense of kinship in his heartfelt narratives. In turn, the feedback and support from his growing audience fuelled his motivation and propelled him to push his creative boundaries even further.

But the blog challenge was more than just an exercise in writing. It was a journey of self-discovery—a path that led Shem to explore the depths of his own thoughts, emotions, and experiences. With each entry, he delved into the recesses of his soul, unearthing hidden treasures of self-reflection and personal growth. Through the act of writing, he found catharsis, clarity, and a profound sense of purpose.

Through his blog, Shem delved into a diverse range of topics, including education, travel, personal growth, and societal issues. His unique perspective, eloquent writing style, and genuine storytelling captivated readers and sparked meaningful conversations. The Ozy Mandias Warning blog became a platform for Shem to share his voice and connect with like-minded individuals who appreciated his insights and experiences.



Shem's passion for writing and sharing his thoughts with the world led him to embark on a new creative endeavour—writing his first book titled "I'm Alarmed: A Selection of His Finest Writings." Filled with his insightful observations, personal anecdotes, and thought-provoking musings, the book was a reflection of his unique perspective on life.

However, Shem faced challenges when it came to publishing his book. Undeterred by the lack of interest from traditional publishers, he took matters into his own hands and decided to self-publish. With a DIY spirit, he diligently bound and crafted each copy of "I'm Alarmed," pouring his heart and soul into the process.

Despite the limited distribution channels and marketing reach, Shem was content with the response he received. Three copies of his book found their way into the hands of readers who resonated with his words and appreciated his literary endeavours. For Shem, it wasn't about the quantity of copies sold but the impact he made on those who experienced his writing.

"I'm Alarmed" represented more than just a book; it was a testament to Shem's courage, creativity, and determination to share his voice with the world. It served as a steppingstone in his writing journey, igniting a spark within him to continue honing his craft and pursuing his passion for storytelling.

In the face of adversity, Shem's self-published book became a symbol of his resilience and unwavering belief in the power of his words. It marked the beginning of his literary legacy, and although the sales numbers may have been modest, the impact it had on the few who read it was immeasurable. Shem's journey as an author had only just begun, and he looked forward to the future, where his voice would continue to resonate with readers who appreciated his unique perspective and literary flair.

It was from this writing challenge that Kiwi Kids News began as a small project in Shem's classroom at Moanataiari School. Recognizing the importance of keeping young minds informed and engaged with current affairs, he saw an opportunity to provide a platform where children could access age-appropriate news content. With the help of his students, Shem started curating and publishing news articles that covered a wide range of topics, from local events to global news. The website quickly gained traction and grew into one of the world's only news platforms designed for children.

Through Kiwi Kids News, Shem aimed to inspire a love for learning, critical thinking, and global awareness among young readers. The platform not only informed children about current events but also encouraged them to voice their opinions and engage in discussions about important issues. Shem's dedication to fostering an informed and empowered youth resonated with educators, parents, and students alike, making Kiwi Kids News a trusted and influential resource in the education community.

As the years went by, Shem's yearly challenges evolved, encompassing various creative and personal goals. From writing books to undertaking physical challenges and exploring new skills, each annual challenge pushed him to step out of his comfort zone, embrace personal growth, and inspire others to do the same.

It was during this time that Shem attempted to become one of the famed Crusader horsemen. As his writing via the Ozy Mandias blog developed he attempted to see if he could become one of the horsemen that come in with the famous Crusaders rugby team. Using the pseudonym of Ozy Mandias Shem wrote a series of letters to the Crusaders franchise. These have been included below.

Crusaders Level 1  
5 Durham Street  
Christchurch

14th January 2009

Ozy Mandias  
Pyes Pa  
Tauranga

*Dear fellow Crusaders,*

*Despite living in Tauranga for the last 4 years I have remained a loyal Crusader supporter. I watch every game with vigor and passion, despite being heavily outnumbered. I have flown my Crusader Flag proudly on all occasions I see fit. Despite this, I have felt an empty void in my life for some time. I can't put my finger in this feeling, but it is real sense of something 'missing' to bring balance to my busy life.*

*However, in a moment of brilliance, when reflecting on my New Years resolution I believe I have found a way to full this personal void. With this newfound desire, in the 14 days following New Years, I have been in training for the position of Crusaders mascot. This has involved daily trips to the gym to increase my upper body strength as well as morning runs along Mount Maunganui beach to improve my aerobic capacity.*

*The reason I write this letter is to confirm when and where the auditions for the Crusaders Mascot will be held. Has a date been set yet? Once I have a date I can tailor my training programme, book my flights and tinker with my gluten free diet to ensure everything is perfect for the audition day.*

*Furthermore, could you please give me an overview of some of the skills that will be tested during the audition? A friend of mine who tried out for the Blues mascot job was a little taken back when he was asked to dress up as a pirate and backward three and half somersault. While the pirate thing was okay he had only trained for a forward somersault.*

*Thank you for your time and I await your reply with interest. GO THE CRUSADERS!!!!*

*Yours sincerely,*

*Ozy Mandias*

Ozzy Mandias  
Pyes Pa  
Tauranga

18th January 2009

Brooke Freeman  
Promotions Manager Canterbury Rugby Football Union  
Level 1, 5 Durham St  
PO Box 755  
Christchurch

*Hi Ozzy,*

*Thanks for your email. Our Crusaders mascots are the Crusaders Horsemen and unfortunately we don't have auditions for the Horsemen. Thanks for your support of the Crusaders.*

*Kind regards, Brooke*

Brooke  
Crusaders Level 1  
5 Durham Street  
Christchurch

22nd January 2009

*kindest Brooke,*

*Thanks for your prompt email and gentle prod in the right direction. I cursed when I read your reply as I have been to that many Crusaders games I knew that the horsemen were the mascots. All those long runs along the beach to improve my own fitness have been worthless.*

*Furthermore, I need to apologise for the time it has taken to reply but it has taken me that long to find a horse suitable to be considered one of the horsemen. Fortunately, I had a friend who had another friend who knows someone with a horse that he was willing to sell. Unfortunately, when I arrived at his small farm I found out it was more of a donkey than the free running stallion I required. Disappointed I looked around, but it is extremely hard to find a suitable horse, able to withstand the harsh Canterbury winter nights, in the sunny Bay of Plenty. Added to this, the economic downturn New Zealand is currently experiencing is not actually affecting the price of horses, so my only option was to take the donkey.*

*At this stage I will be honest with you Brooke, my donkey is not in the best shape. I have carefully scanned my DVD's of past Crusader's games and have determined that the average time for the horsemen to do one lap of the hallowed turf. It takes an average of 27.23 seconds, rounded to 2 decimal places. Currently, running downhill, whip working overtime and with the wind at my back, my donkey, which I have affectionately name Blackadder, covers the same distance in 2min 17 seconds.*

*I have included a picture so that you can see how things are going. Sorry the quality of the picture is not that flash. You can see that 'Blackadder' seems to be enjoying himself and I am sure you've noted the excellent outfit I am wearing. My wife spent hours designing and making this and was my Christmas present last year. Despite the confidence on my face in this photo I am under no illusions here, especially after*

*my last training effort down the beach with Blackadder. It was hard enough just thinking I had to be a normal mascot but now I must learn to ride a donkey. Clearly there are some areas that I need to work on prior to the first game.*

*Equally as clear is the fact that this is not your problem, Brooke. You are probably far too busy with the Super 14 season approaching to be worrying about horses, donkeys and what I got for Christmas. I noticed in your contact details on your letter that you are promotions manager. That sounds like a difficult and demanding job, but it seems that you are probably a long way from the person that I am looking for within the Crusaders set up. Do you have a 'Head of Horses' or a 'Pre-Game Promotions Manager' within the Crusaders organisation that you could perhaps provide me with the contact details for? If not perhaps you could pass on the contact details for the 'Head Horseman' so that I can check about becoming one of the elite. One of the important things I must tell the Head Horseman is that I am unavailable for the first round of the Super 14.*

*Firstly, despite being an optimist (person that is and not the boat) I can't see Blackadder being ready even though I am upping his training next week.*

*Secondly, it is Valentines Day and being a 'man of love', I am busy that day.*

*Thanks for your time Brooke and I do hope you have the necessary contact address for me to carry on my dream.*

*Yours in the Crusaders,*

*Ozy Mandias*



Brooke  
Crusaders Level 1  
5 Durham Street  
Christchurch

11 February 2009

Ozy Mandias  
Pyes Pa  
Tauranga

*Kindest Brooke,*

*Your latest reply must have got lost in the World Wide Web as the contact details for the Horsemen didn't come through. If you recall last time, I was having trouble with my donkey and I had my doubts about whether he could handle the two required laps of Lancaster Park. Unfortunately, my donkey died last week, and this has caused me to have a big rethink about my involvement. The veterinarian said Blackadder died due to undue force on his hind legs.*

*Between you and me I think this was due to a special manoeuvre I had been practicing which involved me standing on the donkeys back while he ran along blindfolded. I felt this could have been such a draw card for your pregame routine and we nearly had the routine sorted. Blackadder's funeral is next week, after which he will be turned into glue. This is unfortunate and I will miss him as we developed a special bond in the few months, we knew each other.*

*Despite this I always look on the positive side of things. As my mother used to say, 'If life gives you a lemon, make lemonade'. With this news I will have to decline being involved as one of the horsemen. I know this will be a shock to you and I am sorry because someone as organised as you would have already sent the advertising to the printer.*

*Rest assured Brooke I am thinking of a way I can still be involved and when it comes to me you will be the first to know. Take care and let's hope for a great start to the campaign Ozy Mandias*

*Kind Regards*

*Ozy Mandias*

*p.s. With Blackadder's funeral coming up I was wondering if you could write a small poem that could be read at the glue factory prior to his transformation.*

Brooke  
Crusaders Level 1  
5 Durham Street  
Christchurch

28th April 2009

Ozy Mandias  
Pyes Pa  
Tauranga

*Kindest Brooke,*

*Long time and still no reply.*

*That was a shame because if you remember my horse had just died and I requested a little poem for his funeral. Sadly, the funeral had to go ahead without any Crusaders input. Equally sad was the large sections of silence in the funeral, as your poem was going to be the main item. Despite this I have moved on and hold no grudges against you or the Crusader organisation. Let's just put that incident behind us and both look forward.*

*Boy, the Crusaders have had a rocky year. Up one week, down the next. This week is a big game, in fact the next three are all must win. Don't you worry though Brooke, I have been a Crusaders man longer than most and when our backs are against the wall that is when we are at our best. I have worked out a way I can contribute to the Crusaders year.*

*Sadly, being a member of the elite horsemen seems to be a bit of a mate's club with a secret handshake. Having no mates and a dislike of shaking hands, this made it difficult to get a ride this season.*

*That is why I have come up with the following proposal. I think our boys will win the next two games easily. That leaves the Auckland game as the clincher. Like you Brooke, I hate the Blues with a passion, but they will be tough. Therefore, I am going to go to the ground, dressed as one of the horsemen. If you remember my wife had made a stunning outfit, so I propose to wear it to the game. I will also take my sons wooden rocking horse and sit on the horse and wave my sword ( which I have made)*

*for the entire 80 minutes. This hometown feel will be what we need to see us over the line and into the semis.*

*There is one hitch to my master plan, TICKETS. Tickets for a game of this importance are about as hard to find as an honest lawyer. I was therefore wondering if the Crusaders could use one of their free tickets for me and my wife (unfortunately she won't be dressed up as she thinks I mad) so we can offer this level of support to the team.*

*I realise I am asking a lot, but then again Brooke there is a lot riding on this game. Nothing ventured nothing gained. The crusaders pride themselves on innovation and planning. This is our chance Brooke, for you and I together to do something special for this team. Just think if they win, it might all be down to your foresight in giving me two free tickets.*

*Be bold Brooke and I look forward to a positive reply.*

*Your mate Ozy*

Brookster  
Crusaders Level 1  
5 Durham Street  
Christchurch

24th May 2009

*Kindest Brooke,*

*Today our relationship must end just like our beloved Crusaders did last night. I am sure you got up to watch the game, unless of course you managed to be part of the travelling party. Sadly, this season has been up and down, but you must be as proud as I am with our team.*

*Toddy is certainly a superb coach. I had half expected the boys to do the business in SA and that would have meant a final over in the fog valley known as Hamilton. For me that would have been only hours ride my car, or fifteen hours on my donkey!!!!*

*So just as Ritchie and the boys hang up their gear for the season, I do the same. My Crusader outfit goes to get dry cleaned and then carefully stored in my garage. My rocking horse I talked about last time will also be put away but judging by the cold weather we have had it will be lucky if it doesn't find its way into our fire by June.*

*Brooke, it has been great getting to know you this year. Your emails, despite being a little infrequent, have been a great source of encouragement to my battle of being a Crusaders supporter up in the Bay of Plenty.*

*Unfortunately, many of the ideas I had to support the Rednblack machine didn't come off, so I will think carefully for next season and will try and tone down some of my ideas to make them more acceptable to mainstream society.*

*Keep up the good work with the RednBlack machine.*

*Your mate,*

*Ozy Mandias*

# - 1 CHRONICLES -

Moving back to Tauranga was a familiar yet exciting chapter in Rachel and Shem's lives. Returning to the comfort of our beloved home at 10 Pokapu Place, they settled back into the community that they had missed during our time abroad. Shem embarked on a new professional journey as he joined the team at Aquinas College, ready to share his passion for education with a new group of students.

Aquinas College welcomed Shem with open arms, and he embraced his role with enthusiasm and dedication. As he stepped into the classroom once again, he was met with the eager faces of students ready to embark on their educational journey. Teaching became more than a profession; it became a platform to inspire, guide, and shape young minds. Shem poured his heart and soul into his lessons, fostering an environment that encouraged curiosity, critical thinking, and a love for learning.

Meanwhile, Rachel took up a position at Bethlehem Pharmacy, where her expertise and warm demeanour made her an invaluable member of the team. Her dedication to patient care and genuine concern for their well-being were qualities that set her apart. Returning to familiar faces and the joy of assisting customers with their healthcare needs brought a sense of fulfilment to Rachel's professional life.

Back in the comfort of our renovated home, they revealed in the joy of being surrounded by familiar sights and cherished memories. The cozy ambiance and personal touches they had added during our renovations transformed the house into a true reflection of our style and personality. It became a sanctuary where we could unwind, create new memories, and cherish the simple joys of everyday life.

It wasn't long before our family experienced another momentous occasion with the arrival of our second child, Eli Banbury. Just like his older brother, Asa, Eli decided to make his entrance two weeks ahead of schedule, surprising us with his early arrival. We couldn't help but marvel at the tiny bundle of joy that entered our lives.



Eli, in all his preciousness, was petite and delicate, resembling the size of a number 20 chicken. His small features filled our hearts with overwhelming love and adoration. We marvelled at his tiny fingers and toes, cherishing every moment spent with this new addition to our family.

As Eli grew, it became apparent that his size was not an accurate reflection of his larger-than-life personality. Despite being small in stature, he possessed an incredible spirit and a captivating presence that drew people in.



In 2008, after the birth of their son Eli, Shem and Rachel made the decision to move from their previous residence at Pokapu Place. It was a significant time for the family as they embarked on a new chapter in their lives. However, the move came with its own set of challenges.

During this period, Eli faced health concerns and had to be hospitalized due to bronchitis. Despite the difficult circumstances, Shem and Rachel remained resilient and determined to secure a new home for their growing family. They successfully managed to sell their previous house, demonstrating their ability to handle multiple responsibilities while navigating through stressful situations.

Their search for a new home led them to 3 Glenorchy Place in Pyes Pa, a location that offered convenience and proximity to Aquinas College, where Shem worked. The move to Pyes Pa marked the beginning of a fresh chapter in their lives, providing a nurturing environment for their children and a comfortable space to call home.

Although challenges arose during this transitional period, Shem and Rachel's determination and resilience allowed them to overcome obstacles and create a stable and welcoming home for their family. The move to Glenorchy Place represented a significant milestone in their journey, laying the foundation for many cherished memories and future experiences.

One cherished tradition that started around 2008 was the concept of Wednesday Night Dinners, which was the brainchild of Shem's mother-in-law, Judy Coster. It became a regular occurrence for the extended family to gather at the cozy home on 165b Valley Road, eagerly anticipating a delightful family meal.

Judy, known for her culinary skills and love for cooking, would dedicate the entire day to preparing a delicious feast for everyone to enjoy. Meanwhile, Ray, Shem's father-in-law, would make a quick trip to the nearby New World supermarket to grab a bag of liquorice all-sorts, his personal indulgence





As the years went by and the family expanded with the arrival of young children, the Wednesday Night Dinners became even more lively and boisterous. It was not uncommon to have a bustling gathering of around 18 to 20 people around the dinner table, filled with laughter and the warmth of togetherness.

With an abundance of little ones running around, it sometimes turned into a friendly competition among the parents to secure a seat next to the window. Once seated, they would find themselves "stuck" in place, unable to offer immediate assistance to any child in need, as if they were on designated "screaming kid duty." This playful dynamic added a touch of humour and excitement to the already vibrant atmosphere.

The Wednesday Night Dinners became a cherished tradition that brought the family closer together, creating lasting memories and strengthening the bonds between relatives. It was a time of sharing stories, catching up on each other's lives, and savouring Judy's delectable meals. These gatherings fostered a sense of unity and love within the family, making Wednesday nights a highlight of the week for everyone involved.

Judy Coster, a compassionate and selfless woman, has dedicated her life to serving others and spreading love wherever she goes. Born on July 12, 1953, in Auckland, New Zealand, Judy's upbringing instilled in her a deep sense of empathy and a desire to make a positive impact in the lives of those around her.

Throughout her education, Judy attended several schools, experiencing different environments and cultivating a diverse range of friendships. From Onehunga Primary to Ruapunga Primary, Thames South Primary School to Mineola New York, Manukau Intermediate to Onehunga High, and finally Colenso College, Judy's educational journey shaped her character and nurtured her natural inclination towards kindness and care.



Judy's time in New York was marked by a significant incident on her first day at her new school. As part of the school's daily routine, students were expected to recite the Pledge of Allegiance, showing their loyalty and respect to the American flag. However, Judy found herself in a unique position as she chose to refuse this customary practice.

In her principled stand, Judy firmly declined to participate in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, citing personal reasons. Her decision to exercise her freedom of expression and not swear allegiance to the flag caught the attention of her classmates and teachers. The school administration quickly took notice, and Judy was promptly sent to the principal's office to address the matter.

In an interesting twist, Judy's father happened to be the principal of the school. This fact added another layer of complexity to the situation. As the principal, her father was responsible for maintaining the school's rules and ensuring a conducive learning environment. However, he also had a personal connection to Judy and understood her reasons for refusing to recite the pledge.

The interaction between Judy and her father in the principal's office was a delicate one. While her father had a professional duty to uphold, he also had a paternal instinct to protect and support his daughter. This presented a challenging predicament for him, as he needed to balance his role as an educator and administrator with his love and understanding as a parent.

Ultimately, the resolution of the situation depended on open communication and mutual respect. Judy's father took the time to listen to her perspective and the reasons behind her decision. He explained the significance of the Pledge of Allegiance in American culture and the expectations within the school environment.

In this crucial conversation, Judy and her father engaged in a thoughtful dialogue, each expressing their viewpoints while seeking understanding and

common ground. Through this process, they were able to find a resolution that respected Judy's beliefs while also considering the school's policies and traditions.

This incident marked a pivotal moment in Judy's time in New York. It highlighted her willingness to stand up for her principles and exercise her right to express herself, even in the face of potential consequences. It also showcased the importance of open dialogue and understanding within a family and educational setting.

As Judy continued her journey at the school, she and her father developed a deeper appreciation for each other's perspectives. Their relationship grew stronger, based on mutual respect, trust, and the recognition that different viewpoints can coexist within a loving and supportive environment.

However, Judy's true essence lies in her servant-hearted nature. She has always placed the needs of others before her own, constantly seeking opportunities to lend a helping hand and make a difference in the lives of those less fortunate. Whether it's supporting family members, friends, or even strangers, Judy's compassionate spirit shines through in every act of kindness and selflessness.

Her ability to listen with empathy, offer comfort, and aid has earned her the admiration and gratitude of countless individuals whose lives she has touched. Judy's presence radiates warmth and compassion, creating a safe space where people feel seen, heard, and cared for.

Beyond her admirable qualities, Judy possesses a genuine love for others and a heart full of generosity. Her servant heart is the driving force behind her tireless efforts to bring joy and comfort to those around her.

Judy Coster, a humble and remarkable woman, has left an indelible mark on the lives of those fortunate enough to know her. Her dedication to serving others, her capacity for empathy, and her unwavering love embody the true

essence of a servant-hearted individual. Her life is a testament to the transformative power of selflessness and the immeasurable impact that one person can have on the world.



Settling into their new home was an exciting adventure for the Banbury family. The house provided plenty of room for their growing family, with spacious bedrooms for each child and generous living areas to accommodate their active lifestyle. They were particularly delighted with the larger backyard, envisioning countless joyful moments and outdoor activities.

In 2009, fresh off the transformative journey of his blog challenge, Shem sought to explore the power of consistency in the seemingly ordinary aspects of life. With a razor in hand and determination in his heart, he embarked on a unique task—to shave every day using the same razor.

What might have appeared as a trivial challenge held a deeper significance for Shem. It was an opportunity to test his perseverance, commitment, and ability to find meaning in the mundane. As the days turned into weeks, and the weeks into months, he discovered that even the simplest of tasks could carry profound lessons.

The razor challenge presented its fair share of obstacles. There were moments when doubt crept in, questioning the purpose behind such a seemingly trivial commitment. The monotony of the daily ritual threatened to dull his enthusiasm. Yet, Shem remained resolute, refusing to let doubt overshadow his determination.

Through the routine act of shaving, Shem learned the value of consistency and the rewards that come with sustained effort. He discovered that even the smallest tasks, when approached with unwavering dedication, can carry profound meaning. Each stroke of the razor became a testament to his commitment and a reminder of his ability to persevere through the mundane.

The razor became a symbol of discipline and patience. It taught him to embrace the present moment and find beauty in the routine. As the days passed, Shem noticed subtle changes in his mindset. He became more mindful, finding solace in the simple act of shaving, and appreciating the sense of renewal it brought.

Moving to Pyes Pa brought a strong sense of community and belonging to the Banbury family. They quickly formed friendships with their neighbours and embraced the supportive atmosphere that surrounded them. The local amenities, parks, and schools further enhanced their decision, making it an ideal place to raise their children.

The proximity to Aquinas College was a significant advantage for Shem, allowing him to spend more quality time with his family and actively participate in their school activities. From dropping the kids off in the morning to picking them up in the afternoon, he cherished these precious moments that further strengthened their bond.

As the Banbury family settled into their new home, Pyes Pa became their sanctuary—a place where birthdays were celebrated, gatherings were hosted, and countless cherished memories were created. Their children flourished in their new surroundings, forming new friendships and embracing the sense of community that surrounded them.

Relocating to Pyes Pa was more than just a change of address for the Banbury family—it marked the beginning of a new chapter filled with growth, love, and the realization of their dreams. They felt immense gratitude for the opportunities that came their way and eagerly looked forward to the adventures that awaited them in their new home.

In 2010, Shem ventured into the realm of unconventional challenges by embarking on a task that would undoubtedly raise eyebrows—wearing the same pair of silk boxers for the entire calendar year. It was a commitment that pushed the boundaries of societal norms and tested Shem's ability to find beauty in simplicity.

Choosing silk boxers as his garment of choice, Shem sought a practical solution that would allow for regular washing and quick drying. While some may have questioned the rationale behind such an unusual challenge, it was a testament to Shem's ability to commit to even the most seemingly trivial tasks with discipline and unwavering focus.

The silk boxer challenge went beyond the mere act of wearing the same underwear for 365 days. It represented Shem's willingness to embrace discomfort and find joy in simplicity. By stripping away the need for variety

and indulgence, he aimed to uncover the essence of contentment and appreciation for the little things in life.

Throughout the year, Shem encountered moments of doubt and discomfort. The allure of fresh, new undergarments beckoned, and the repetitive nature of his silk boxers became a constant reminder of the commitment he had made. Yet, he remained steadfast in his resolve, recognizing that this unique challenge was an opportunity for personal growth and self-reflection.

Wearing the same pair of silk boxers' day after day became a symbol of resilience and adaptability. It served as a reminder that true satisfaction does not lie in material possessions or external validation but in finding contentment within oneself. The challenge pushed Shem to look beyond societal expectations and seek fulfilment in the simplicity of his daily experiences.

As the year progressed, Shem noticed a shift in his mindset. The silk boxers, once a source of peculiarity, became a source of comfort and familiarity. He learned to appreciate the durability and softness of the fabric, finding solace in its gentle embrace. The challenge taught him the value of mindfulness and the ability to find beauty in the most ordinary aspects of life.

The silk boxer challenge may have seemed eccentric to many, but for Shem, it represented a profound exploration of self-discovery and contentment. It revealed his capacity to push boundaries, challenge societal norms, and find fulfilment in the simplest of experiences. Through this unconventional journey, Shem cultivated a greater sense of appreciation for the little things that often go unnoticed.

As the year ended, Shem celebrated the completion of the silk boxer challenge with a renewed perspective on life. He understood that true happiness does not reside in the pursuit of novelty and excess but in the ability to embrace simplicity and find contentment within oneself. This lesson would continue



to shape his approach to life's challenges and his unwavering commitment to finding joy in the everyday.

This was also time when Shem's writing really began to develop. Reading in the NZ Herald that there was a Mills and Boon writing competition he excitedly put pen to paper and penned one of his greatest works. His short, evocative story was published in the Herald in the less than 350-word category.

*Stacy propped herself up on the pillow and looked across at Doug. The early morning sun had just risen over the balcony and was beginning to venture into their love nest. This was Stacy's paradise. Doug's curly locks hung freely as she reached over and caressed his olive skin. Despite the touch he remained asleep; his chest rising and falling with the regularity of an Aussie scrum. The bed sheets loosely hung around his waist, exposing both his rock-hard abs and his Webb Ellis Trophy, as Stacy affectionately called it.*

*Stacy inched across and snuggled in beside him, engulfing herself in his radiating warmth. Her skin pressed against his, sending warm waves down her spine. She lay still enjoying the memories that flooded into her vision. Doug had been the dependable rock in her life. She smirked as she remembered him nervously showing her intricate backline moves with the pepper shaker during their first date. It was this shyness which had drawn Stacy to the man that lay beside her.*

*But Doug's sudden jolt reminded her that things were now different. She braced herself for the onslaught which came quickly and suddenly. Doug's body turned uncontrollably, arms thrashing wildly as he wrestled with the demons in his mind. As the linen wrapped steadfast around his torso he screamed with pain "Wayne Barnes...Wayne Barnes."*

*Stacy grabbed him, held him and comforted him, as she had for the last six months since the French Test. She now accepted it was a different Doug that lay next to her. His shell: the cast-iron abs, the glowing eyes, those crushing thighs, were all the same but now something had changed. Stacy held him tight and forced his head into her bosoms as she repeated her favourite mantra, "There, there Doug Howlett, it's just a game."*

2010 was also an important year for Amos and Jacqui when their love story reached its pinnacle on the 13th of February 2010, when they exchanged vows in a heartfelt ceremony held at the Art Centre in Christchurch. Their journey to this momentous day had been filled with serendipitous encounters, shared dreams, and a whirlwind romance that swept them off their feet.

Jacqui, a true Christchurch local, was born and raised in the heart of the city. Coming from a proud Dutch heritage, she inherited a strong emphasis on family and the values that come with it. This cultural influence has shaped Jacqui's life and instilled in her a deep appreciation for the importance of strong familial bonds.

After completing her early education at Middle Grange School in Christchurch, Jacqui embarked on her academic journey at Canterbury University. With a natural flair for law and a keen intellect, she pursued a degree in law, paving the way for a successful career in the legal field. Throughout her time at university, Jacqui not only excelled academically but also developed her own unique sense of style, becoming known for her impeccable fashion choices and innate ability to effortlessly exude elegance.

While building her professional life, Jacqui's commitment to her family remained unwavering. As a mother to her two children, Harry and Mila, she made the thoughtful decision to homeschool them. Recognizing the value of personalized education and the opportunity to create a nurturing and tailored learning environment, Jacqui dedicated herself to providing her children with a well-rounded education. With her characteristic grace and

determination, she skilfully balanced the role of a loving mother and an inspiring teacher, instilling in her children a thirst for knowledge and a deep appreciation for learning.



In addition to her academic and parenting pursuits, Jacqui's keen eye for fashion and personal style has always set her apart. With an innate sense of elegance and an ability to effortlessly put together stunning ensembles, she has become a role model for those who admire her fashion-forward approach. Jacqui's impeccable taste and confidence in her personal style serve as a testament to her creativity and unique sense of self.

Jacqui's life is a testament to the harmonious blend of family values, educational pursuits, and a keen eye for style. Her journey from Christchurch to Canterbury University, her commitment to homeschooling her children,

and her innate sense of fashion all reflect the multifaceted nature of her personality. Jacqui's unwavering dedication to her family, her pursuit of knowledge, and her ability to leave a lasting impression through her impeccable style make her a truly remarkable individual.

From the moment they first laid eyes on each other, Amos and Jacqui knew there was something special between them. Their connection was instantaneous, and their love blossomed with a fervour that could not be contained. After a short but unforgettable courtship, they found themselves standing on the precipice of a lifelong commitment, ready to embark on the incredible journey of marriage.

Surrounded by their loved ones and bathed in the ambiance of the Art Centre, Amos and Jacqui pledged their eternal love and devotion to each other. The venue, with its historic charm and artistic allure, provided the perfect backdrop for their union—a symbol of their shared passion for creativity, beauty, and the vibrant city that had played witness to their love story.

The wedding day was filled with joy, laughter, and heartfelt moments. Amos and Jacqui, radiant with happiness, exchanged heartfelt vows that reflected their deep love and unwavering commitment to one another. As they pronounced their eternal promises, the room overflowed with warmth and emotion, creating an atmosphere of pure magic.

The celebration continued into the night, with dancing, laughter, and toasts to the newlyweds. Family and friends joined together to raise their glasses and share in the joy of Amos and Jacqui's union. It was a day that would be forever etched in their hearts, a testament to their love and the beginning of a new chapter in their lives.

Amos and Jacqui's wedding at the Art Centre in Christchurch was not just a celebration of their love; it was a celebration of their shared values, their dreams, and the vibrant spirit that united them. The venue served as a

symbolic canvas on which their love story was painted, intertwining art, culture, and their deep connection.



As they embarked on this new chapter as husband and wife, Amos and Jacqui carried with them the memories of their wedding day — the laughter, the love, and the promise of a lifetime together. Their journey as a married couple would be filled with adventure, growth, and the unwavering support they had found in each other.



In 2011, the Banbury family joyfully welcomed their newest addition, Milli. However, Milli's arrival proved to be a memorable experience filled with unexpected twists and turns. As Rachel went into labour, Shem found himself in a race against time, manoeuvring through traffic on Cameron Road to reach the hospital. Luck was on their side, as they managed to secure a parking spot just outside the entrance.

The urgency continued as they hurried down the main corridor, with Rachel's contractions intensifying. It felt like a race against the clock, but they were determined to make it to the delivery room in time. With sheer determination, they reached the sanctuary of the delivery room just in the nick of time. The relief was palpable as they settled in, ready to bring their precious baby into the world.

However, Milli's birth proved to be a departure from the relatively smooth experiences of their previous children. The first year of her life presented unexpected challenges, as Milli struggled with incessant crying during the nights. Rachel and Shem found themselves tag-teaming, taking turns walking Milli to sleep in the lounge to provide her comfort and much-needed rest.

Despite the challenges, Rachel and Shem remained resilient, drawing strength from their love for Milli and their dedication to being the best parents they could be. They persevered through sleepless nights, supporting each other with unwavering love and understanding.

As Milli grew, her vibrant personality began to shine through, bringing immeasurable joy to the Banbury family. Though her first year may have been challenging, it only deepened the bond between Rachel, Shem, and their children. They faced each hurdle with determination, knowing that their love and support would guide them through any obstacle.

Looking back on those early days, Rachel and Shem cherished the memories of comforting Milli in the late hours, as it was a testament to their unconditional love and commitment as parents. Milli's presence enriched

their lives, teaching them patience, resilience, and the true meaning of unconditional love.

As Milli's cries turned into giggles and her restless nights transformed into peaceful slumbers, Rachel and Shem celebrated the milestones and cherished the joy that their youngest child brought into their lives. Milli's spirited nature and unique personality would forever hold a special place within the Banbury family, reminding them that even through the toughest of times, love conquers all.

As the year 2011 dawned, Shem was brimming with enthusiasm and a determination to conquer his next ambitious challenge—consuming 3000 Weetabix in a year. It was an audacious goal that pushed the boundaries of what seemed possible, but Shem was ready to embrace it head-on. Little did he know that unforeseen circumstances would soon test his resilience and force him to adapt his plans.

During his Weetabix-consuming journey, Shem found himself in the confines of a hospital room, grappling with suspected appendicitis. The pain in his abdomen became an unwelcome obstacle, threatening to derail his pursuit of the monumental Weetabix goal. Frustration and disappointment set in as he realized that his health needed to take precedence over his ambitious challenge.

The hospital visit served as a stark reminder of the unpredictability of life and the importance of prioritizing one's well-being. Shem's commitment to his health required him to make a difficult decision—to temporarily suspend his Weetabix quest and focus on recovery. It was a humbling experience that forced him to reassess his priorities and acknowledge the fragility of his own physicality.

During his recovery, Shem reflected on the lessons learned through his previous challenges. He recognized the need for adaptability and flexibility when faced with setbacks. Just as he had adjusted his plans during the silk



boxer challenge, he understood the importance of finding alternative paths to personal growth and achievement.

Shem's setback became an opportunity for growth and introspection. He delved into research on nutrition and sought guidance from professionals to develop a balanced diet plan that would aid his recovery and overall well-being. This unexpected turn of events allowed him to explore different aspects of his health and expand his understanding of self-care.

The next few years were a whirlwind for the Banbury family, with the dynamic of their growing brood keeping them on their toes. With three children under the age of five, their days were a flurry of diaper changes, cleaning up messes, and tending to the various needs of their little ones. Rachel managed to balance her time by working part-time, while Shem continued his role at Aquinas College, gradually assuming the position of Year 7 and 8 Leader of Learning.

As the year 2012 unfolded, Shem found himself eager to take on his next physical challenge—a push-up challenge that would test his strength and endurance. With unwavering determination, he embarked on a journey to complete a specific number of push-ups each day, pushing himself to new limits. However, one night at a church camp was particularly memorable.

Amidst the serenity of the campsite, the sound of Shem's rhythmic push-ups echoed through the air. The rustling of his sleeping bag, accompanied by Rachel's playful laughter, created an amusing misunderstanding among fellow campers. Shem had to clarify the following morning that the noises were not the result of a late-night rendezvous, but rather his commitment to completing his daily push-up challenge.

This humorous incident served as a reminder of Shem's unwavering dedication and his ability to find creative solutions in the face of adversity. It showcased his resilience in overcoming setbacks and his willingness to adapt to unexpected circumstances. Shem's ability to maintain a positive attitude

and a sense of humour even in challenging situations further solidified his resilience as a defining characteristic.



Late in the year during a leisurely bike ride, tragedy struck as Shem was involved in a sudden and unexpected crash. The impact left him with broken ribs, excruciating pain, and a temporary halt to his push-up challenge. It was a setback that could have dampened his spirits and discouraged him from continuing his pursuit of physical fitness. However, Shem's resilience prevailed.

With a resilient spirit, Shem focused on his recovery, acknowledging that healing was paramount to his overall well-being. Despite the disappointment of not being able to complete the push-up challenge as planned, he shifted his mindset and found alternative ways to maintain his physical fitness while allowing his body to heal.

The broken ribs served as a temporary barrier to his push-up challenge, but they did not deter Shem from his pursuit of physical well-being. He engaged in gentle exercises and modified workouts that allowed him to gradually regain his strength without compromising his recovery. This adaptive approach demonstrated Shem's resilience and his refusal to let setbacks define his journey.

It was also during 2012 that Ray Coster, a dedicated clergyman and spiritual leader, was appointed as the Presbyterian Moderator of New Zealand in 2012, a position of great responsibility and honour within the Presbyterian Church. As Moderator, Ray assumed the role of overseeing and guiding the affairs of the church throughout New Zealand, providing spiritual guidance, support, and leadership to both clergy and congregations.

During his tenure as Moderator, from 2012 to 2014, Ray Coster fulfilled his duties with utmost dedication and a deep commitment to his faith. With his extensive knowledge and experience in ministry, he brought wisdom, compassion, and a strong sense of community to his role. His leadership

helped foster a sense of unity and collaboration among Presbyterian congregations across the country.



As the Presbyterian Moderator, Ray Coster actively participated in and chaired various Church Committees at the national level. These committees played a crucial role in shaping the policies, direction, and decision-making processes of the Presbyterian Church. Through his involvement, Ray contributed his insights, expertise, and thoughtful perspectives, ensuring that the church's activities aligned with its values and principles.

The title of "Moderator" bestowed upon Ray Coster during his term carried with it the esteemed designation of "Right Reverend" or "Rt Rev." This title is an acknowledgment of the Moderator's elevated position within the church

hierarchy, representing the respect and reverence accorded to their leadership role.

Even after completing his term as Moderator, Ray Coster continued his ministry at the national level, remaining an active member of various Church Committees. His ongoing involvement demonstrated his enduring commitment to serving the Presbyterian community and supporting its growth and development.

Throughout his time as Moderator and beyond, Ray Coster's unwavering dedication to his faith, his extensive involvement in the Presbyterian Church, and his compassionate leadership have left a lasting impact on the church and its members. His guidance and contributions have helped strengthen the bonds of the Presbyterian community and have inspired many to deepen their spiritual connections and live out their faith in meaningful ways.

As the calendar turned to 2013, Shem sought a challenge that would shift his perspective and delve into the essence of simplicity. He made the decision to forgo a seemingly ordinary yet comforting object—a pillow. The experiment of sleeping without a pillow may have appeared mundane to some, but for Shem, it was a transformative journey into the realm of his physical well-being.

Throughout the year, Shem navigated adjustments and discoveries, understanding that even the smallest changes can yield profound effects. Sleeping without a pillow challenged his comfort and disrupted his usual sleep routines. As he explored different positions and adjusted to the absence of cushioning, Shem became more attuned to his body's needs and the impact of his sleeping habits on his overall well-being. This seemingly simple challenge shed light on the importance of listening to his body and finding balance in the pursuit of a good night's rest.

In 2013, marking a significant milestone of a decade since their marriage, Shem and Rachel embarked on a memorable journey to Tonga to celebrate

their anniversary. Prior to their departure, arrangements were made for their children, Asa, Eli, and Milli, to stay with their grandparents, ensuring they were well taken care of during their parents' absence.



Tonga, a picturesque Pacific Island paradise, provided the perfect backdrop for Shem and Rachel to relax and enjoy each other's company. The couple immersed themselves in the beauty of the island, basking in its tropical landscapes, pristine beaches, and crystal-clear waters. They indulged in the tranquillity and serenity of the surroundings, taking long walks along the shore, soaking up the warm sun, and appreciating the natural wonders of the island.

During their seven-day stay in Tonga, Shem and Rachel had the opportunity to explore the rich culture and traditions of the local people. They engaged in various activities and experiences, such as attending traditional dance performances, visiting local markets, and sampling the delicious Tongan cuisine. The couple also took advantage of the island's breathtaking underwater world, engaging in snorkeling or perhaps even diving,

marveling at the vibrant coral reefs and the colourful marine life that call the waters of Tonga home.



In this idyllic setting, Shem and Rachel had the chance to reconnect and reflect on the journey they had undertaken together as a couple. They reminisced about the joys and challenges they had faced throughout their marriage, appreciating how their love and commitment had grown stronger over the years. It was a time of relaxation, adventure, and heartfelt moments, deepening their bond and reaffirming their love for one another.

After seven unforgettable days in Tonga, Shem and Rachel returned home, refreshed and rejuvenated, ready to continue their journey as a couple and as parents to their beloved children. The memories created during their anniversary celebration in Tonga would forever hold a special place in their hearts, serving as a reminder of the love and commitment they shared and the adventures they had experienced together.

It was also in 2013 that Ruth, Rachel's sister was married to Shaun. Shaun Sutcliffe, born on September 4th, 1981, in South Africa, embarked on a life

journey filled with adventure, a passion for athletics, and a deep commitment to helping others. From his early days at Arbor Primary School to his later education at Benoni High School and Nambor Christian College, Shaun demonstrated an eagerness to learn and a natural curiosity about the world.

Over the year's Shaun also developed a passion for fishing. Armed with an impressive array of fishing gear, he eagerly embarked on fishing expeditions, hoping to reel in the catch of a lifetime. However, despite his enthusiasm and well-equipped fishing arsenal, Shaun's family humorously noted that they had yet to witness him catching anything. Nevertheless, his love for fishing remained undeterred, and he continued to enjoy the peacefulness and tranquillity that the sport provided.

One event with Shaun remains vivid in Shem's memory, forever etched as a testament to his unique and comical adventures. It was a day filled with the excitement of a fishing trip, yet it ended with an unexpected twist that would leave everyone in disbelief.

Shaun, the proud owner of a small dinghy equipped with a modest outboard motor, had set out for yet another angling excursion. However, luck seemed to elude him on that particular day, as the fish remained elusive, evading his every attempt. Undeterred by his lack of success, Shaun loaded the boat onto the trailer hitched to his car and began the journey back home.

Little did Shaun know that fate had a different plan in store for him. As he rounded Barkers corner, a sharp turn in the road, the unimaginable happened—the outboard motor, which had faithfully propelled the boat earlier, came loose and tumbled from its perch. Unbeknownst to Shaun, lost in his thoughts of the fish that got away, he continued driving, blissfully unaware of the mishap unfolding behind him.

Picture this peculiar sight: Shaun's car, towing the boat trailer, with the once-reliable motor now bouncing along behind, held precariously by a single tether rope. Onlookers could hardly believe their eyes as they witnessed this



unusual procession making its way through the streets. It was a sight that would forever be etched in the memories of those fortunate enough to witness it.

Despite the absurdity of the situation, Shaun continued his journey, seemingly unfazed by the chaos unfolding in his wake. Perhaps his mind was still preoccupied with the fish that had managed to escape his grasp, or maybe he simply remained blissfully ignorant of the spectacle trailing behind him. Regardless, the unforgettable image of Shaun driving nonchalantly, with the outboard motor bouncing along in tow, served as a reminder of his adventurous spirit and ability to find humour even in the most unexpected circumstances.

However, Shaun's passions extended beyond his athletic endeavours. He found fulfilment in working for International Needs, an organization dedicated to improving the lives of those in need. Shaun's compassion for people and his desire to make a positive impact on the world led him to contribute his skills and energy to this noble cause. Through his work, he had the opportunity to touch the lives of countless individuals and create lasting change. Shaun Sutcliffe's life has been characterized by a spirit of adventure, a commitment to athletic excellence, and a genuine desire to make a positive impact on the lives of others. Whether pushing his physical boundaries as a triathlete, working for a noble cause, or embracing the wonders of the natural world, Shaun's journey serves as an inspiration to others, reminding us to embrace our passions and seek meaningful connections with the world around us.



## -2 CHRONICLES -

During the hectic years of raising a young family, Shem decided to take on a new personal challenge: triathlon. Eager to test his endurance and push his physical limits, he registered for his first-ever event, the Karapiro Half Ironman. The race, held at the picturesque Karapiro Lake, presented its own unique obstacles, including navigating through challenging underwater weeds. Although Shem completed the distance in an average time, the experience left him with valuable lessons and an undeniable sense of excitement.

Motivated by the thrill of triathlon, Shem joined the Tauranga Triathlon Club and committed himself to regular training sessions. As his passion for the sport grew, he set ambitious goals for himself. In 2013, he aimed to qualify for the New Zealand team at the World Duathlon Championships, scheduled to take place in Pontevedra, Spain.

However, just days before the qualifying race, Shem fell ill. Despite feeling under the weather, he accompanied the Aquinas Cross Country team for a run. The exertion proved too much, and Shem fainted at Barkes Corner. Upon regaining consciousness, he found concerned faces surrounding him. Recognizing that something was amiss, he decided to visit the doctor.

Dr. Hay, a trusted medical professional, examined Shem, but even his guidance couldn't dissuade him from racing. Determined to pursue his dreams, he lined up at the starting line in Taupo that Saturday and successfully qualified for the World Championship in standard duathlon.

However, a subsequent visit to the doctor revealed unsettling news. A blood test indicated a heart attack, prompting swift action. Shem was rushed from Aquinas College to the hospital, where he underwent five days of intensive evaluation. Medical professionals meticulously examined his heart through

blood tests and exercise testing. While Shem experienced another fainting episode during this period, the tests ultimately revealed that he hadn't suffered a heart attack. Instead, it was discovered that Shem had an athlete's heart, a condition known as myocarditis, which meant that if he abruptly ceased vigorous exercise, his blood pressure would drop.

This revelation explained Shem's fainting episodes and underscored the importance of managing his exercise regimen carefully. The experience served as a wake-up call, reminding him of the delicate balance between pushing his physical limits and prioritizing his long-term well-being.

Undeterred by this setback, Shem approached his athletic pursuits with a newfound perspective. He continued to train and compete in triathlons, understanding the importance of listening to his body and taking appropriate precautions. The journey toward the World Duathlon Championships in Spain remained a cherished aspiration, and Shem remained determined to make his mark in the world of endurance sports while prioritizing his health and family.

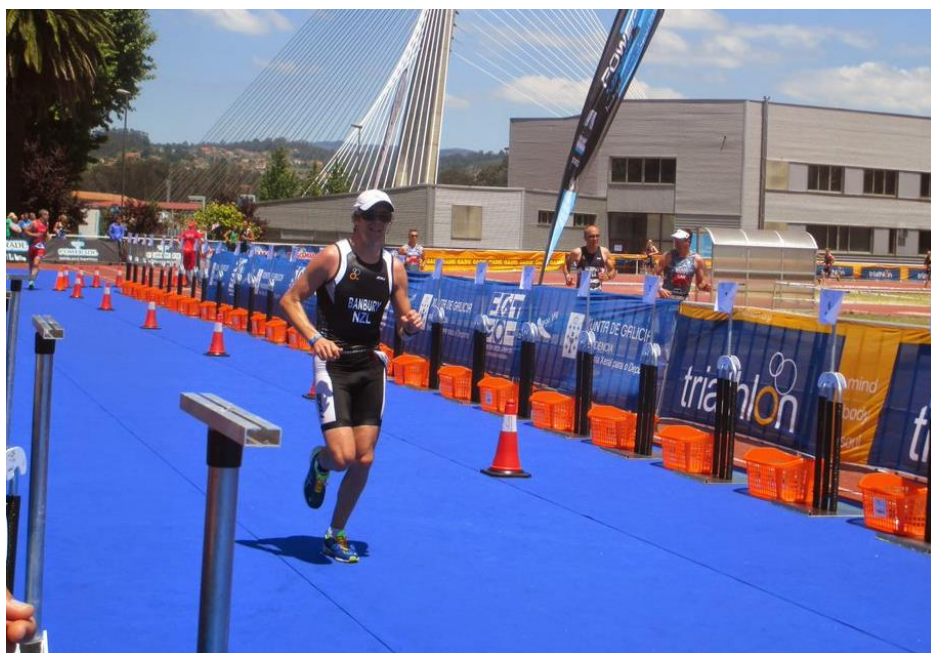
This chapter of Shem's life highlighted the delicate nature of pursuing one's passions while navigating the unexpected twists and turns that life presents. It reinforced the importance of seeking medical advice, adapting to new knowledge, and embracing a balanced approach to achieve both personal and physical well-being.

Under the guidance of renowned coach Craig Kirkwood, Shem embarked on an intense training regimen in preparation for the World Championships. With a clear goal in sight, he dedicated himself to improving his performance and pushing his limits.

The World Championships in Spain presented a formidable challenge, but Shem was determined to give it his all. The racecourse demanded endurance, agility, and mental fortitude. As the starting gun fired, Shem tackled the gruelling 10-kilometer run, completing it in an impressive time of 39 minutes

and 1 second. He then swiftly transitioned to the 40-kilometer bike leg, clocking in at 1 hour and 9 minutes. The final push came in the form of a demanding 5-kilometer run, which Shem conquered in 21 minutes and 3 seconds. With a total time of 2 hours, 13 minutes, and 12 seconds, he crossed the finish line with a sense of accomplishment and pride.

While the World Championships were the focus of the trip to Spain, Shem and Rachel also took the opportunity to reconnect with loved ones. They travelled to London, where they met Rachel's brother Steven and Karen, cherishing precious moments together. Additionally, they made a return trip to Scotland, where they reconnected with friends from their time living there. The journey not only provided a chance to celebrate Shem's achievements but also allowed them to create lasting memories and strengthen their bonds with loved ones.



This experience served as a testament to the power of pursuing one's goals while also cherishing the connections and relationships that enrich our lives. Shem's journey to the World Championships exemplified the dedication, hard work, and support that propelled him forward, both in his athletic pursuits and in fostering meaningful connections with family and friends.



With the lessons of simplicity in mind, Shem embarked on his challenge for 2014—a year of consuming only water. This minimalist approach to sustenance tested his self-control and offered a profound appreciation for the purity and essential nature of water. As he refrained from consuming other beverages, Shem experienced a heightened awareness of his body's hydration needs and the profound impact that mindful consumption can have on overall health. This challenge served as a reminder that meaningful change can often be found in the simplest of choices we make each day.

Cousin Jen, a cherished member of the family, played a significant role in our lives. She was more than just a cousin; she was a close friend and confidante. Born on July 20, 1975, Jennifer Anne Peeters brought warmth and joy wherever she went. Her infectious smile and unwavering positivity endeared her to everyone fortunate enough to know her.

On April 26, 2008, Jen embarked on a new chapter of her life when she married Richard Cornelis Peeters. Richard, our Dutch lemon farmer, was indeed a rare species in our family. You see, it's not every day you come across someone with such an intriguing occupation, especially in a country known more for its tulips and windmills than its lemon groves.

Their union was blessed with the arrival of their son, William Robert Fairburn Peeters, on December 23, 2011. Jen embraced motherhood with the same love and enthusiasm that characterized every aspect of her life.

Despite facing immense challenges, Jen's spirit remained unbroken. Her courage and resilience were truly inspiring, and she faced each day with grace and determination. Her battle with cancer was a testament to her strength and the unwavering support of her loving family.



Sadly, on August 24, 2014, Jen left us after a valiant fight against cancer. Her passing left a void that could never be filled, but her memory lives on in our hearts. Jen's legacy is not defined by the years she spent with us but by the love, laughter, and precious moments we shared together. She taught us the importance of cherishing every moment and finding joy even in the face of adversity. Cousin Jen's memory continues to be a source of inspiration and a reminder to live life to the fullest, just as she did.

In 2015, Shem took inspiration from the renowned Wim Hof and embraced extreme exposure to cold temperatures as part of his yearly challenge. This included taking cold showers throughout the year—a test of both physical endurance and mental fortitude. The icy water became a symbol of his rebellion against the comforts of modern living, pushing his boundaries and resilience to new heights. Especially during the harsh winter months, when the chill seemed unbearable, Shem tapped into the power of his mind to overcome discomfort. This endeavour taught him the potential for personal growth through embracing challenges and finding strength in the face of adversity.

It was during this year that Shem and Rachel decided to treat their family to an unforgettable experience - attending the highly anticipated Black Caps versus Australia World Cup game at Eden Park. Little did they know that they were about to witness a match that would go down in cricketing history.

As the game unfolded, the Black Caps started strongly, collecting Australian wickets easily to restrict them to 152. In reply, New Zealand started strongly, setting a solid foundation in their pursuit of Australia's target of 152 runs with Brendon McCullum smashing the ball to every boundary. The atmosphere in the stadium was electrifying, with fans on the edge of their seats, eagerly anticipating every delivery.

However, Australia proved their resilience and fought back fiercely. Mitchell Starc showcased his bowling prowess, taking crucial wickets and creating



tension in the air. The match became a nail-biting contest as both teams battled it out on the field, displaying their immense skill and determination.

Amid the intense back-and-forth, the Black Caps found themselves in a precarious situation. With no recognized batters left, it seemed as though victory was slipping away. But in a remarkable display of courage and composure, Kane Williamson, the team's talisman, stepped up to the plate.

With the weight of the nation's hopes resting on his shoulders, Williamson exhibited nerves of steel. He unleashed a breathtaking stroke, smashing the ball over the boundary for a crucial six. The crowd erupted with euphoria, their cheers reverberating throughout Eden Park. In that single moment, the game was transformed, and the atmosphere became one of sheer jubilation.

The game had everything a cricket fan could dream of - thrilling moments, incredible displays of skill, and the unwavering spirit of competition. For Shem, Rachel, and their family, being present at Eden Park that day was an experience they would cherish forever. It was a reminder of the power of sports to unite, captivate, and leave an indelible mark on the hearts of those lucky enough to witness it.

As the year 2016 dawned, Shem recognized the overwhelming presence of the digital world in his life. In an era dominated by social media and online connections, he felt the need to disconnect and explore the richness of the offline realm. Shem made the bold decision to take a year-long hiatus from social media, disconnecting from the digital noise and rekindling a deeper connection with the tangible world. This challenge allowed him to reclaim his time, nurture authentic relationships, and rediscover the beauty of personal connections. It was a transformative experience that reminded him of the importance of being present, nurturing genuine human interactions, and finding balance in the digital age.

The family's daily routine revolved around creating a nurturing and playful environment for their children. Trips to the local parks became a regular

occurrence, where the kids could run, play, and explore to their heart's content. The sound of laughter and the sight of cricket games being played in the backyard became a familiar backdrop to their lives. Shem and Rachel took joy in teaching their children the essential skills of growing older, such as riding bikes and discovering new hobbies.

As time seemed to blur together, birthdays, holidays, and weekends seamlessly merged into one continuous stream of cherished moments. The Banbury family created lasting memories through celebratory gatherings, adventurous outings, and quality time spent together. Each milestone and occasion became an opportunity to celebrate the unique personalities and growth of their children.

Amidst the chaos and busyness of everyday life, Shem and Rachel found solace and fulfilment in witnessing their children's development and nurturing their individual interests. The love and bond shared within the family acted as a foundation for their shared experiences and allowed them to navigate the challenges that came their way with grace and resilience.

Although the days may have been filled with countless tasks and responsibilities, the Banbury family approached each moment with a deep sense of gratitude and appreciation for the joys and blessings they had been bestowed. As their children blossomed and flourished, Shem and Rachel embraced the role of guiding and nurturing them, knowing that these formative years were precious and fleeting.

Through the laughter, tears, and the beautiful chaos that defined their lives, the Banbury family found strength, love, and fulfilment in the shared journey of raising their children. The memories created during these early years would forever hold a special place in their hearts, as a testament to the boundless love and dedication that defined their family unit.

It was during 2015 that Shem embarked on a successful coaching stint for Bay

of Plenty Cricket at the prestigious Riverbend Tournament in Napier. The yearly trip with Asa and Eli to Napier was something that Shem enjoyed with his brother-in-law Andrew.

Andrew Coster, born on November 18th, 1976, in Dunedin, embarked on a journey that led him to become a respected medical professional and a passionate advocate for fine dining. His educational journey took him through various schools, starting with Timaru South Primary School and later Mount Primary when his family relocated. He continued his education at Mount Intermediate and Mount College, acquiring a solid academic foundation.

Driven by a desire to pursue medicine, Andrew attended both Auckland and Otago University, where he dedicated himself to honing his medical skills. Throughout his studies, he demonstrated a remarkable dedication to his craft, consistently striving for excellence in his chosen field.

Outside of his medical career, Andrew developed a deep passion for fine dining. He found solace and joy in the art of preparing exquisite meals, often dedicating entire days to meticulously crafting culinary experiences for his extended family. Andrew's culinary skills became renowned among his loved ones, and his meals became a centrepiece of cherished family gatherings.

Cricket also held a special place in Andrew's heart, and he had the opportunity to share his love for the sport through coaching. Together with Shem, he coached teams at the prestigious Riverbend Tournaments in Napier, showcasing their exceptional coaching prowess. The duo's coaching dominance was evident, with their teams losing only two games out of the five tournaments they participated in.

However, amidst the triumphs and successes, Andrew harboured a strong dislike for the culinary offerings at the Riverbend campsite. One particular night stands out in his memory, when a corned beef meal was served, leaving

an indelible mark as one of the worst culinary experiences he had ever encountered.

Andrew's journey has been marked by a commitment to excellence in both his medical career and his passion for fine dining. Whether providing medical care or crafting delectable meals, he continues to leave a lasting impression on those around him with his dedication, skill, and unwavering pursuit of excellence.



Motivated by his previous successes and driven by a desire to challenge his physical and mental limits, Shem set his sights on the ultimate feat of endurance: the New Zealand Ironman. This iconic race, held in the picturesque town of Taupo, consisted of a gruelling 3.8-kilometer swim, followed by a challenging 180-kilometer bike ride, and culminating in a marathon-distance run.



Recognizing the magnitude of this endeavour, Shem once again enlisted the expertise of Coach Craig Kirkwood, whose guidance had proven instrumental in his previous achievements. Under Kirkwood's watchful eye, Shem embarked on an intense training program that pushed his boundaries and prepared him for the rigors of the Ironman.

With a focus on endurance, strength, and mental resilience, Shem dedicated himself to countless hours of swim, bike, and run training. Additionally, he sought the expertise of Liz Van

Welie, renowned for her aquatics training, to further enhance his swimming performance.

Race day arrived, and Shem stood among a sea of determined athletes, ready to tackle the monumental challenge ahead. The swim leg commenced, with Shem navigating the waters with determination and skill, completing the demanding distance in an impressive time of 1 hour, 2 minutes, and 39 seconds.

Transitioning to the bike leg, Shem harnessed his endurance and steady pace, pedalling his way through the scenic New Zealand landscape. The gruelling 180 kilometres demanded physical and mental fortitude, but Shem remained resolute, crossing the finish line of the bike leg in an impressive time of 5 hours, 47 minutes, and 31 seconds.

With tired legs but an unwavering spirit, Shem embarked on the final leg of the Ironman—the marathon. Mile after mile, he drew upon his training, pushing through fatigue and testing his limits. The crowd cheered as he crossed the finish line, completing the marathon in an impressive time of 3 hours, 39 minutes, and 54 seconds.



In an extraordinary display of athleticism and determination, Shem completed the New Zealand Ironman in under 11 hours, with a total time of

10 hours, 37 minutes, and 54 seconds. This remarkable achievement not only showcased his physical prowess but also exemplified his unwavering dedication, mental resilience, and the invaluable support of his coaches and training partners.

One of Shem and Rachel's shared passions was immersing their children, Milli, Eli, and Asa, in the wonders of nature. They embarked on numerous memorable outdoor adventures together, but two trips left a lasting impression on their family.

The first standout experience was a cycling trip along the picturesque Waikino and Waihi path. As they set off, it became apparent that Eli was struggling to maintain his usual pace, much to the family's surprise. He seemed uncharacteristically slow and frequently voiced his frustration. Shem, concerned about his son's performance, couldn't help but comment, "This is not how Banbury's work - we keep giving 100%." The situation perplexed them until the following day when they discovered that Eli's bike had a mechanical issue, with his brake locked onto the wheel. It was a relief to realize that Eli's apparent lack of effort was not due to a waning spirit, but rather an unfortunate mechanical mishap. This revelation brought a renewed sense of unity and understanding within the family as they continued their cycling adventure, appreciating the beautiful surroundings without the weight of misunderstanding.



The second memorable event took the family on a tramping trip to Waihoonu Hut, nestled within the captivating landscapes of the Northern Circuit. Arriving at the hut after a fulfilling day of hiking, they were met with unexpected company in the form of the Wellington Tramping Club, who had already occupied the entire space. The cramped hut provided little room to manoeuvre, and the atmosphere was lively with the camaraderie of fellow adventurers. However, amidst the bustling setting, Asa began feeling unwell. In the dead of night, he woke Shem, expressing his discomfort, and muttered, "I think I'm going to be sick." Aware of the crowded and confined conditions, Shem, hoping to minimize disruption, urged Asa to go back to sleep. But fate had a different plan. Within moments, Asa succumbed to a bout of vomiting, filling the air in the hut with an unmistakable and pungent odour. The unfortunate incident left the family simultaneously sympathetic and embarrassed, their senses overwhelmed by the unexpected turn of events. It became a memorable anecdote, serving as a reminder of the unpredictable nature of outdoor adventures and the resilience required to navigate unforeseen challenges.

Despite these unforeseen obstacles and humorous misadventures, Shem and Rachel's commitment to exploring the outdoors with their children remained unwavering. These shared experiences not only brought the family closer but also instilled in Milli, Eli, and Asa a deep appreciation for nature's beauty and the resilience needed to overcome unexpected hurdles.

Over the next few years, Shem continued his tradition of setting yearly challenges, each presenting its own unique set of trials and accomplishments. These challenges, unlike resolutions, were not aimed at improving his life or rectifying perceived flaws but rather focused on personal discipline, organization, and the fulfilment of seemingly ordinary tasks.

One of the central figures in Shem's life is his father, Ross Banbury. In 2018, Ross and his wife Diane made a significant move from Blenheim to Te Puke when Ross was appointed as the new minister at Te Puke Baptist Church.



This new chapter in their lives marked the continuation of a remarkable journey of faith and service that has touched the lives of many.



Beyond his pastoral duties, Ross is known for his unwavering support of the Crusaders rugby team, displaying an infectious enthusiasm that mirrors his passion for life. Each morning, he embarks on a walk, not only to invigorate his own spirit but also to engage with the world around him. Ross takes pride in his meticulously maintained lawn, a symbol of the care and attention he

brings to every aspect of his life. But it is his genuine love for people that shines through most prominently.

Ross has a heart for others, and he finds great joy in spending time with people from all walks of life. He takes a genuine interest in their stories, their families, and their unique experiences. It is in these interactions that Ross discovers the shared threads that connect us all, fostering a sense of unity and belonging. He approaches each encounter with warmth, empathy, and a sincere desire to make a positive difference in the lives of those he meets.

Throughout his time as a minister, Ross has become a rock for many individuals, providing spiritual guidance and support during times of challenge and uncertainty. His genuine presence and heartfelt compassion have touched the lives of countless people, instilling in them a sense of hope and faith. He embraces the opportunity to walk alongside others, offering a listening ear, words of wisdom, and a comforting presence.

As a hands-on minister, Ross continually seeks ways to connect with people on a deeper level, looking for meaningful ways to engage and support their spiritual journeys. His dedication to understanding and meeting the needs of others has earned him the admiration and respect of his congregation. Ross's ministry is rooted in the belief that true transformation happens through genuine connections and relationships, and he embraces this philosophy with unwavering dedication.

In Shem's life, Ross Banbury stands as a role model, embodying the values of integrity, compassion, and a deep commitment to serving others. The love and support he has provided have laid a strong foundation for Shem's own journey, inspiring him to make a positive impact in the lives of those around him. Ross's remarkable dedication to his faith, his family, and his community continues to guide and inspire Shem as he navigates the chapters of his own life.

In the tapestry of Shem's autobiography, the presence of his father, Ross Banbury, is woven with threads of love, guidance, and unwavering faith. Ross's passion for people, his dedication to ministry, and his genuine care for others have shaped Shem's understanding of what it means to live a life of purpose and service. As Shem reflects on the profound impact his father has had, he recognizes the profound blessing of having a role model who exemplifies the true meaning of love, compassion, and faith.



Another influential figure in Shem's life is his mother, Diane Banbury. When Shem was younger, Diane pursued her passion for helping others by training as a social worker. Balancing the demands of running a household with her studies, she demonstrated remarkable determination and a commitment to personal growth. After qualifying, Diane channelled her expertise into the educational sphere, working in schools to support students and collaborate with educators to address social and emotional needs.

Beyond her professional pursuits, Diane has a creative spirit that shines through in her love for crafts. Her home is adorned with a myriad of knick-knacks and artwork, each piece reflecting her unique sense of style and appreciation for beauty. Diane finds joy in creating and surrounding herself with elements that inspire and bring warmth to her surroundings.



Much like her husband Ross, Diane has a genuine love for people and takes delight in getting to know them on a personal level. She enjoys engaging in conversations that delve into the intricacies of individuals' lives and family dynamics. This curiosity stems from her innate ability to empathize and connect with others, making them feel heard and valued.

Diane's love for cooking is another aspect that brings people together. She finds great pleasure in preparing delicious meals and inviting loved ones to share in the experience. Her warm hospitality creates an atmosphere of togetherness and joy, where meaningful connections are forged over shared laughter and memorable conversations.

In Shem's life, Diane's presence has been a source of comfort, wisdom, and unwavering support. Her nurturing nature and genuine interest in the lives of those around her have cultivated an environment where Shem and his siblings have thrived. Diane's passion for understanding and helping others has influenced Shem's own journey, inspiring him to approach relationships and interactions with empathy, kindness, and a genuine desire to make a positive impact.

As the threads of Shem's autobiography come together, the role of his mother, Diane Banbury, weaves a tapestry of love, creativity, and compassionate care. Her commitment to her family, her craft, and her community has left an indelible mark on Shem's own path, instilling in him the values of empathy, connection, and the importance of creating spaces where people feel seen and heard. Diane's presence is a reminder of the power of love and the profound impact one person can have in shaping the lives of others.

Undoubtedly, 2017 presented one of Shem's most physically demanding challenges—running for a minimum of 30 minutes every day. It was a test of endurance, mental resilience, and dedication to fitness. However, as the challenge progressed, Shem encountered difficulties in the final month due to plantar fasciitis, a painful foot condition. Despite the setbacks, he refused

to give up and adapted his running routine to accommodate the injury. With unwavering determination, Shem completed the challenge, proving to himself and others that with perseverance and adaptability, even the toughest obstacles can be overcome.

Tracking back to 2014, Shem and his work colleague Richard Watson had embarked on an exciting venture by starting the Tauranga Mountain Film Festival. This annual event aimed to showcase a diverse range of outdoor films, inspiring adventure enthusiasts and nature lovers alike. By 2017 it was one of the most significant events in the Bay of Plenty. Each year, Shem and Richard obtained the rights to captivating films and organized screenings at various local venues, such as the Art Gallery, Historic Village, and Tauranga Boys College.

The Tauranga Mountain Film Festival quickly garnered a devoted following and became a popular attraction in the community. People eagerly purchased tickets for around \$20 each, eager to immerse themselves in the thrilling and awe-inspiring stories depicted in the films. The success of the festival also translated into financial gains, making it a profitable venture for Richard and Shem.

As a reward for their hard work and dedication to organizing such a remarkable event, Shem and Richard enjoyed annual trips as a special perk. These trips provided an opportunity for them to relax and recharge after the festival, celebrating their achievements. Some of these memorable trips included visits to Hamner and Queenstown, where they revelled in the stunning landscapes and indulged in thrilling outdoor activities.

Additionally, Shem ventured to Melbourne as part of one of these trips to take on the marathon challenge. Running through the iconic Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG), he completed the race with a time of 3 hours and 37 minutes, an achievement he modestly described as "very average." Nevertheless, the experience of participating in such a renowned marathon

added another dimension of adventure and personal accomplishment to Shem's journey.



The Tauranga Mountain Film Festival not only provided an avenue for outdoor film enthusiasts to come together but also allowed Shem and Richard to share their passion for adventure and inspire others through captivating storytelling. The festival's success and the accompanying yearly trips served as a testament to their dedication and the enduring impact of their shared love for the outdoors.

One event that remains etched in Shem's memory is the boxing match he had with Richard. It was an exhilarating experience as neither of them had ever stepped into the ring before. The opportunity to learn from a staff member who had represented New Zealand in boxing was too good to pass up.

Shem and Richard squared off against each other in a spirited contest consisting of three one-minute rounds. Although the rumours suggest that no significant punches were landed, both participants experienced the stinging sensation of a couple of well-placed jabs. It was a test of their endurance, agility, and ability to dodge incoming strikes.

While the outcome of the match may not have been determined by a knockout blow, the experience itself was invaluable. Shem and Richard gained firsthand knowledge of the intensity and skill required in the sport of boxing. It served as a testament to their determination and willingness to step out of their comfort zones to pursue new challenges and push their limits. The friendly bout further strengthened their bond and created a lasting memory that they would often look back on with a mix of pride and humour.





## - PROVERBS -

During this period, the Banbury family established a cherished tradition: the annual Hot Water Beach camping trip. Starting in 2012 and continuing for the next decade, Shem, Rachel, along with Andrew and Wendy, embarked on a week-long adventure to Hot Water Beach.

The anticipation of the trip would build throughout the year, and upon arrival, they would secure their favourite campsite by the stream. This serene location provided the perfect backdrop for a memorable family getaway.

The highlight of the camping trip was undoubtedly the time spent at Hot Water Beach itself. The family would eagerly make their way to the beach, armed with shovels, ready to dig their own personal hot pools in the sand. For hours, they would soak in the warm, geothermal waters, enjoying the unique experience of creating their very own spa-like oasis. The children, including Milli, delighted in riding the waves on their boogie boards, reveling in the joyous freedom of the ocean.

The adventures didn't stop at Hot Water Beach. The family would venture to Whangamata, exploring the town's second-hand stores, hunting for hidden treasures and enjoying the thrill of unexpected finds. A visit to Cathedral Cove became an annual tradition, where they would hike through scenic trails, marvel at the majestic rock formations, and bask in the beauty of nature's wonders. Buffalo Beach also held a special place in their hearts, particularly for Jonathan Coster, who proudly shared his song, composed at the age of six, with the entire family.



Alongside the relaxing beach time and soaking in the warm waters, there was another tradition that added excitement and friendly competition to their trips—the highly coveted golf tournament at Purangi Golf Course.

The golf tournament at Purangi Golf Course was a highlight for everyone involved. The tournament brought together family and friends, creating an atmosphere of camaraderie and spirited competition. Each participant eagerly awaited their pairing, which was determined to ensure a fair and balanced competition. The format of the game was a best-ball format, where the teams played together, with each player hitting their shot and the team selecting the best one to continue.

Among the numerous pairings, it was the duo of Shem and Milli that consistently stood out as a force to be reckoned with. Their chemistry and complementary playing styles seemed to make them a formidable team.

Whether it was Shem's strategic approach, Milli's precision, or their shared love for the game, their partnership proved to be a winning combination. They navigated the course with finesse, showcasing their skills and leaving their competitors in awe.

With each swing of the club, Shem and Milli embraced the spirit of competition while enjoying the scenic beauty of Purangi Golf Course. The lush green fairways and challenging holes provided the perfect backdrop for their friendly rivalry. As they played their way through the course, laughter, cheers, and good-natured banter filled the air, creating unforgettable memories that would be cherished for years to come.

The success of Shem and Milli on the golf course not only brought them joy but also strengthened their bond as father and daughter. The shared experiences, the moments of celebration, and even the occasional disappointments forged a deeper connection between them. They learned to support each other, celebrate each other's achievements, and find solace in the shared passion for the game.

The unpredictable weather often played a significant role in shaping the experiences of Shem and his family. In 2023, their eagerly awaited trip was met with heavy rains and strong winds, cutting it short and presenting them with unexpected challenges. Although disappointed, they made the most of the situation, finding alternative ways to enjoy their time together despite the inclement weather.

Amidst the camping adventure, there was an intriguing aspect that added a touch of friendly competition and amusement to the trip—the race to set up the tents. Each family sought to showcase their tent-pitching prowess, resulting in a light-hearted competition. Shem and Rachel, being seasoned campers, quickly established their tent with practiced efficiency. With their task completed in a flash, they found delight in observing the humorous dynamic between Wendy and Andrew as they struggled to erect their own

tent. It became a source of entertainment, a moment of respite for Shem and Rachel to sit back, relax, and enjoy the unfolding marital banter.

As the years went by, the camping group expanded, and Wendy and Andrew eventually joined Shem and Rachel in their tent-pitching escapades. However, the comical challenges persisted, particularly for Shaun and Ruth, who faced ongoing struggles with their Australian-made tent. Held together by a generous amount of tape, their tent often provided unexpected entertainment as they navigated its quirks and idiosyncrasies. It became a humorous tradition, with everyone eagerly anticipating the hilarious moments that would inevitably arise during Shaun and Ruth's tent setup.

Beyond the practicality of putting up tents, this light-hearted competition served as a bonding experience, fostering laughter, camaraderie, and a shared appreciation for the unique quirks and mishaps that camping can bring. It was a testament to the resilience and adaptability of the group, finding joy in the little challenges and creating lasting memories through the shared experience of tent pitching.

The Hot Water Beach camping trips were not just about the destination or the activities but also about the connections formed and the moments shared between family and friends. The unpredictable weather and the entertaining tent-pitching rivalries added an extra layer of excitement, humour, and camaraderie to these annual adventures. Through rain or shine, they embraced the spontaneity of nature and the quirks of their camping experiences, cherishing the bonds that were forged and the memories that were created amidst the laughter and light-hearted competition.

In true camping fashion, the evenings were filled with spirited card games, fostering friendly competition and light-hearted laughter. Cricket matches on the beach became a beloved tradition, with everyone joining in the fun, regardless of age or skill level. The long, sunny days seemed to stretch on

forever, offering endless opportunities for bonding, relaxation, and making lasting memories.



One year, Milli had an unforgettable experience when she caught an eel from the nearby river. With Wendy's expertise, the eel was expertly filleted and cooked up, becoming a unique culinary adventure that added to the richness of their camping escapades.

Wendy, born on June 4th in Taiwan, embarked on a remarkable journey that led her to excel in her education and pursue her passion for healthcare. Her early years in Taiwan saw her attend Shi-dong Elementary and Lan-ya Junior High, where she demonstrated a natural aptitude for learning and a dedication to her studies. When her family immigrated to New Zealand, Wendy continued her educational journey at Westlake Girls High in Auckland, immersing herself in new experiences and embracing the opportunities that came her way.

Wendy's commitment to education remained unwavering as she pursued her dreams of becoming a doctor. She went on to complete her education at Otago

University, where her dedication, intellect, and hard work shone brightly. Excelling in her studies, Wendy embarked on a path that would allow her to make a significant impact in the field of healthcare. Her accomplishments as a doctor stand as a testament to her perseverance and the high standards she holds herself to.



Beyond her academic pursuits, Wendy has a fondness for beach outings and an impressive collection of bikinis. Trips to Hot Water Beach became a chance for her to showcase her vibrant personality and love for fashion, as each day brought a new bikini selection. Her confidence and joy were evident as she embraced the beauty of the beach, making cherished memories with family and friends.

One of Wendy's most cherished experiences was swimming with dolphins in Northland. Surrounded by the beauty of nature, Wendy's love for adventure and connection with the animal kingdom came together in a magical encounter. No doubt, her infectious enthusiasm was complemented by her choice of a fashionable bikini, adding an extra touch of vibrancy to the unforgettable experience.

Wendy's journey is one characterized by academic excellence, a passion for healthcare, and a zest for life. Her commitment to education, her love for the beach, and her remarkable experiences, such as swimming with dolphins, have shaped her into the remarkable person she is today. Wendy's vibrant spirit and dedication to her chosen path serve as an inspiration to all, reminding us to embrace our passions, celebrate life's joys, and make meaningful connections along the way.

The Hot Water Beach camping trips became an annual pilgrimage for the Banbury family, a time of togetherness, exploration, and the celebration of simple joys. These cherished traditions created bonds that would endure and memories that would be treasured for a lifetime.

In December 2017, Shem and Rachel embarked on an exciting new chapter as they moved into their new home at 23 St. Thomas Ave. The spacious house, spanning 247 square meters, was nestled on a generous 690-square-meter plot of land, offering ample room for the growing Banbury family.

One of the remarkable features of their new home was its breathtaking view overlooking Aquinas College. Recognizing the beauty of their surroundings,



Shem wasted no time in enhancing the vista by cutting down the fence, allowing for an unobstructed view of the majestic Mount Maunganui. Moreover, he installed a convenient gate that provided direct access to the college's field. This clever modification effectively extended their property to encompass the expansive 21,000-square-meter field, transforming it into their own private recreational haven.



With the gate granting them access to the college's facilities, the Banbury family now had the privilege of enjoying various sports amenities just steps away from their doorstep. The field boasted soccer fields, five basketball hoops, a hockey turf, cricket nets, and even a playground for the children's enjoyment. The convenience of having access to these amenities brought countless hours of fun and recreation for the entire family, fostering a sense of community and an active lifestyle.

While the family relished the benefits of their expanded property, they were also grateful for the dedicated maintenance provided by someone else who took care of the field each week. This arrangement allowed the Banbury's to fully enjoy the benefits of their extended recreational space without the added responsibilities of upkeep.

The move to 23 St Thomas Ave was not only a physical relocation but also symbolized a new chapter in the Banbury family's life. It offered them not just a beautiful and spacious home but also an enhanced lifestyle filled with opportunities for outdoor activities and a stronger connection to the community.

In 2018, the Banbury family embarked on a memorable holiday to Fiji, creating cherished memories and strengthening their family bonds. The trip encompassed both relaxation at a luxurious resort and exploration of the main island, offering a well-rounded experience for everyone.

The crystal-clear waters and warm weather of Fiji provided the perfect backdrop for the family to unwind and enjoy themselves. The children, especially Milli, were thrilled to take part in the resort's children's program. Milli's excitement peaked when she had the opportunity to participate in a tie-dye workshop, creating her very own unique and colourful tie-dyed t-shirt. This creative activity brought joy to Milli and allowed her to express her individuality in a fun and vibrant way.

The family enjoyed the many amenities and activities offered by the resort, immersing themselves in the beauty of the surroundings and taking advantage of the opportunities for relaxation and recreation. Whether it was lounging by the pool, exploring the nearby beaches, or engaging in water sports, there was something for everyone to enjoy.

In addition to the resort experience, the family also ventured out to explore the main island of Fiji. They had the chance to immerse themselves in the local culture, visit traditional villages, and interact with the friendly Fijian

people. This cultural exchange provided valuable insights and created lasting memories for the entire family.

The Fiji holiday served as a valuable time for the Banbury family to disconnect from their daily routines and bond with one another. Through shared experiences, laughter, and the joy of discovering a new destination together, their family bonds were strengthened and cherished moments were created.

In 2018, Shem started on a unique and exciting challenge: to eat a Brussels sprout each day. This endeavour proved to be an adventurous journey of culinary exploration and newfound appreciation for the once despised vegetable.

As the challenge unfolded, Shem embraced the opportunity to experiment with different ways of preparing and enjoying Brussels sprouts. He delved into various cooking methods, from roasting and sautéing to steaming and incorporating them into flavourful salads. Each day presented a chance to get creative in the kitchen, exploring new recipes and techniques to bring out the best flavours and textures of these miniature cabbage-like delights.

Throughout the challenge, Shem discovered a wide range of delicious Brussels sprout recipes, expanding his palate and opening his eyes to the versatility of this humble vegetable. He learned that Brussels sprouts could be transformed into delectable dishes when paired with complementary ingredients such as bacon, balsamic glaze, Parmesan cheese, or cranberries. The once-dismissed vegetable became a canvas for culinary exploration, enabling Shem to savour its unique taste and texture in delightful and unexpected ways.

The Brussels sprout challenge not only introduced Shem to a variety of flavourful creations but also transformed his perspective and relationship with food. It taught him the importance of embracing new experiences and stepping out of his comfort zone, even in the realm of seemingly simple

vegetables. Shem realized that preconceived notions and childhood aversions could be shattered when approached with an open mind and a willingness to try new things.

By the end of the year, Shem had successfully completed the Brussels sprout challenge, having consumed these nutritious and versatile vegetables every single day. The journey had not only expanded his culinary horizons but also fostered a newfound appreciation for the flavours, textures, and possibilities that lie within Brussels sprouts.

In 2019, Shem embraced another unique food-themed challenge by using the same knife, fork, and spoon for an entire year. This endeavour brought forth a series of unexpected events and humorous anecdotes that added a touch of excitement to his dining experiences.

The year started off with a memorable incident in January when Shem visited a café in Hahei. As he momentarily left his table to use the restroom, the waiter mistook his utensils for being unused and cleared them away. Upon returning to his seat, Shem found himself without his trusty knife and fork, resulting in a comical interaction where he had to discreetly approach the staff and request the return of his utensils.

As the months went by, Shem encountered both amusing and challenging situations as he stuck to his commitment of using the same set of cutlery. In March, during a family gathering, he found himself faced with a Lasagna prepared by his mother-in-law. Unfortunately, the absence of his usual utensils made the dining experience rather messy as he resorted to using his hands to enjoy the delectable dish. Laughter filled the room as Shem embraced the unconventional approach, reminding everyone that sometimes improvisation is key.

However, it was during the end-of-year function at his school that Shem faced a minor setback. Just a mere 15 days away from completing the challenge, he realized he had forgotten his utensils at home. Determined not to break his

year-long commitment, Shem politely excused himself and swiftly drove back home to retrieve his trusty knife, fork, and spoon. His dedication and attention to detail drew both admiration and amusement from his colleagues, making the evening even more memorable.

Throughout the year, Shem's unique challenge sparked conversations and brought joy to those around him. It served as a reminder to embrace the quirks and unexpected moments that arise in life, finding humour and resilience in even the smallest of mishaps.

By the end of 2019, Shem successfully completed his knife, fork, and spoon challenge, having relied on the same set of utensils for every meal. This culinary adventure not only added a touch of amusement and laughter to his dining experiences but also fostered a sense of creativity, adaptability, and appreciation for the simple pleasures of daily life.

The year of 2019 also witnessed one of the great sporting travesties with New Zealand cruelly robbed of the Cricket World Cup. Once again Shem turned to his writing to find meaning and solace.

*Let's be clear from the outset, cricket is not fair. It never has been, it never will be, and it has never claimed to be.*

*Cricket is played with 11 other people on your team. Most of the time the game is mundane and, to naked eye, relatively boring. Each ball is comparable to the previous, each over a mirror of the last. However, these collection of delivers and accumulation of overs form a cricket game. A game that tells a story that resembles life.*

*At times you are in total control. You are the star – all eyes are on you. You can directly affect the game, and its outcome. Ball in your hand, bat held high, it doesn't matter, your destiny is firmly in your hands. You are puppeteer in your own life.*

*But the reality is that these moments are fleeting. The better players make these moments last longer, but only for a while. For just like in life, for the majority of the time when you play cricket you are a passenger. Along for the ride just watching things unfold. All you can do is look on, watch and react. Occasionally you might contribute but you are the puppet, controlled by external forces.*

*On Sunday July 16th 2019, cricket showed how unfair she can be. England needed 9 runs off 3 deliveries. New Zealand were in relative control. Holding the Cricket World Cup aloft for the first time seemed destiny.*

*Then cricket intervened.*

*On the third to last delivery, when returning for a second run the ball hit the English batsman's outstretched bat and rolled to the boundary. The outcome – two completed runs and the umpires making the decision to call ta 'dead ball' due to the obstruction.*

*England now needed 7 off 2 deliveries. That would be fair. But cricket, like life, isn't fair.*

*Instead, the umpires talked, and England were credited with four extra runs because the ball crossed the boundary rope. England now required a manageable 3 runs off two deliveries.*

*The batsman appeared remorseful but don't be deceived. He wasn't going to block the next 2 balls to even the ledger. The cricket gods had smiled on him. It was now England's destiny.*

*As the game unfolded there was more drama. Amazingly, the scores were tied after the final ball. The rules dictated that a super over would be the fair way to declare a winner.*

*The super overs were just that. Super.*

*Clean hitting, fast running, precision fielding and accurate bowling. Eleven deliveries into the super overs and we have Martin Guptil on strike – 2 runs needed for victory.*

*New Zealand cricketing fans held their breath knowing that his cricketing luck is a yo-yo. Hero from the cricket World Cup 2015 – out of form during the World Cup 2019. Last game his run out of India's star batsman saw New Zealand progress into the final – today it was his throw that went to the boundary the previous over. Like all cricketers the sporting gods have a love/hate relationship with Guptil.*

*Jofra Archer, bowls.....a yorker.... dug out to deep midwicket. Guptil scampers the first, turns quickly, and within the blink of an eye he is run out meters short.*

*The super over is tied and the umpires make the decision to call the game a draw. We have draws in test cricket – the purest form of the game – lets have one here.*

*That would be fair. But cricket, like life, isn't fair.*

*In the end the decision is made to award the 2019 Cricket World Cup to the team that scored the most boundaries. Obviously, boundaries are more important than wickets!*

*All that didn't matter as England celebrated with Irishman Eoin Morgan lifting the trophy for England. Kiwi born Stokes is the hero of the day. West Indian born Archer the youngster who held his nerve. South African Jason Roy named England player of the tournament.*

*That's not fair!*

*Cricket, since the first game in the 16th century, has been a team sport that is designed to be unfair. Most situations arise that are out of your direct control. Your fate, and the fate of your team is usually in the hands of your teammates, the opposition, the weather, the umpire or the rules of the game.*

*Cricket doesn't favour the strong over the weak – most of the world's greatest batsmen are small and slight.*

*Cricket doesn't reward hard work – try telling your 10 year old who practiced all week, only to score a second ball duck, that he just needs to put in more work.*

*Cricket has no favour towards the best players – tell that to the gun batsman run-out without facing a ball due to his inept batting partner.*

*Cricket does not give value for moments of brilliance – a good deliver from an opening bowler get edged for four while a rank long-hop bowled by an amateur gets a wicket.*

*Cricket has no regard for personal situation – the grossly out of form batsman gets caught by a spectacular catch while those players in form see their chances dropped by the opposition fieldsmen.*

*Cricket does not worry about ever decision being consistent or correct – ask Ross Taylor who was lbw when the ball was missing the stumps and then talk to Trent Boult who doesn't get an lbw when the ball was hitting the stumps.*

*In saying all this, it is the unfairness which makes cricket special and the wonderful game it is. They say that sport builds character and few would disagree. Cricket is different. It builds your character and then it tests your character by being grossly unfair. So maybe the lesson here is that the 2019*



*Cricket World Cup Final reminded us of the golden rule of life – Life is unfair...get over it.*

At the beginning of 2020 Shem celebrated the marriage of his brother Josiah to Josephine. Josephine Banbury, a remarkable individual with a deep passion for indigenous rights and women's empowerment, was born on April 20, 1988. Her upbringing was marked by a diverse range of cultural experiences, shaping her worldview and fuelling her commitment to social justice.



From 1990 to 1996, Josephine spent her childhood in Zimbabwe, where she was exposed to the rich heritage and traditions of the country. During this time, she attended Masvingo Nursery and later joined Kyle School, institutions that played a pivotal role in her educational foundation.

After her time in Zimbabwe, Josephine returned to India, her family's ancestral home. Here, she continued her academic journey, attending Anita Vidyalaya in 2004 and SNHSS, Okkai in 2006. These institutions provided her with a strong educational background while fostering her passion for advocacy and human rights.

In 2006, Josephine embarked on a new phase of her academic pursuit, enrolling at Mahatma Gandhi University. Over the course of three years, she immersed herself in the study of indigenous peoples' rights, delving deep into the complexities and challenges faced by marginalized communities. Her time at Mahatma Gandhi University deepened her understanding of the cultural, social, and political dynamics affecting indigenous populations, igniting her dedication to fighting for their rights and amplifying their voices.

Seeking to expand her knowledge and broaden her horizons, Josephine joined the University of Madras in 2009, where she pursued further studies in women's rights. Immersed in a dynamic academic environment, she engaged with feminist theory, gender studies, and intersectional approaches to addressing systemic inequalities. Her time at the University of Madras provided her with a comprehensive understanding of the struggles faced by women around the world and fortified her resolve to advocate for gender equality.

In 2014, Josephine embarked on an exciting international journey, enrolling at the esteemed University of Canterbury. It was during her time at Canterbury that she met Josiah, the love of her life, who shared her passion for social justice and humanitarian causes. Josephine's academic focus at

Canterbury centred around indigenous rights and women's empowerment, aligning with her longstanding commitment to these critical issues.

China and Zimbabwe hold a special place in Josephine's heart. These two countries have not only offered her unique cultural experiences but also provided her with valuable insights into the diverse struggles faced by indigenous communities and women. Josephine's connections to these nations have further deepened her understanding of the global nature of social justice and fuelled her determination to create positive change on an international scale.



On January 18th, 2020, Josephine embarked on a new chapter of her life, joining hands in marriage with Josiah. Their union represents a powerful alliance, combining their shared values and dedication to making a difference in the world.

Josephine Banbury's story is one of resilience, advocacy, and unwavering commitment to human rights. Through her academic pursuits and personal experiences, she has emerged as a passionate advocate for indigenous peoples and women, striving to dismantle barriers, amplify voices, and create a more equitable society. Her journey serves as an inspiration to all those who seek to make a meaningful impact in the lives of others and champion the rights of the marginalized.

In 2019, the Banbury family embarked on an adventurous journey to conquer the Northern Circuit in Tongariro National Park. Filled with anticipation and excitement, they set out to explore the magnificent landscapes and challenge themselves along the way.



However, Mother Nature had her own plans in store for them. Unpredictable weather conditions, including heavy snowfall on December 27th, posed a significant obstacle and made it impossible for the family to undertake the famous Tongariro Crossing. The safety of all family members was of utmost importance, and the challenging conditions warranted a change of plans.

Despite the setback, the Banbury family's adventurous spirit remained undeterred. They adapted to the circumstances and decided to forge ahead, exploring alternative routes along the Northern Circuit. Undeterred by the weather's unexpected turn, they pushed forward, traversing approximately 35 kilometres of the trail.

As they hiked through the breathtaking landscapes, each step taken by the Banbury family brought them closer together and ignited their love for adventure. The snow-capped mountains, rugged terrain, and awe-inspiring vistas served as a reminder of the power and beauty of nature. Along their modified route, they encountered stunning alpine lakes, dense forests, and panoramic views that left an indelible mark on their memories.

Although they couldn't complete the Tongariro Crossing as initially planned, the Banbury family's resilience and determination shone through. They embraced the unexpected challenges as an opportunity to bond, support one another, and create unique family stories that would be cherished for a lifetime. The journey, though altered, became a testament to their unwavering spirit and their ability to find joy and adventure in every situation.

While the Northern Circuit may not have unfolded exactly as they had envisioned, the Banbury family's experience was rich with moments of laughter, discovery, and shared accomplishments. It served as a reminder that true adventure lies not only in conquering great heights but also in the ability to adapt, appreciate the journey, and create lasting memories along the way.

During Shem's life, he witnessed and experienced the significant impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in New Zealand. In February 2020, as the virus began to spread globally, New Zealand confirmed its first case of COVID-19. Little did Shem know that this would mark the beginning of a transformative period in the country's history.

As the pandemic escalated, New Zealand took swift and decisive action. In March 2020, Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern announced a nationwide lockdown, known as Alert Level 4, to curb the spread of the virus. This meant that Shem and his family had to adapt to a new way of life, confined to their home and navigating the challenges of remote work and home-schooling.

Despite the hardships, New Zealand's efforts paid off. By April 2020, the country had successfully eradicated community transmission of COVID-19, allowing for a cautious easing of restrictions. Shem, along with the rest of the nation, celebrated this milestone as businesses began to reopen under Alert Level 3.



However, the battle was far from over. In August 2020, Auckland, New Zealand's largest city, faced a renewed lockdown due to a new cluster of

COVID-19 cases. This served as a reminder of the ever-present threat of the virus and the need for continued vigilance.

Over time, New Zealand adapted its strategies to manage the virus. In October 2020, the country partially reopened its borders, allowing limited numbers of international travellers to enter, subject to strict quarantine and testing measures.

In February 2021, Auckland faced another setback as new cases of community transmission emerged, linked to the more contagious UK variant of the virus. Shem and his family found themselves once again navigating the challenges of lockdown measures and adapting to the ever-changing circumstances.

Hope arrived in March 2021 when New Zealand launched its COVID-19 vaccination campaign, starting with priority groups such as border workers and healthcare personnel. This marked a significant step towards protecting the population and regaining a sense of normalcy.

By April 2021, a travel bubble known as the Trans-Tasman bubble was established between New Zealand and Australia, allowing quarantine-free travel between the two countries. It provided a glimmer of hope and reconnection with the outside world.

As the year progressed, New Zealand made significant progress in its vaccination efforts, leading to the easing of restrictions and a return to relative normalcy by December 2021. Shem and his family were able to resume activities and embrace a sense of optimism after enduring the challenges brought about by the pandemic.

During the challenging period of the COVID-19 pandemic, Shem faced the unique task of transitioning to online teaching because of the nationwide lockdown. As schools closed their doors, he had to adapt quickly to the new virtual learning environment. Shem dedicated himself to creating online

educational content and delivering lessons through video conferencing platforms.

While working from home presented its own set of challenges, it also provided an opportunity for increased family time. With restrictions in place, visits to shops and social gatherings were limited, but Shem and his family made the most of their time together. They would engage in outdoor activities, enjoying walks and playtime in their local area.

During the lockdown, Shem found himself presented with a unique opportunity to create and experience the perfect day. With the usual routines disrupted and a surplus of time at his disposal, he devised a plan to fill his day with a series of activities and tasks that would bring him joy and fulfillment.

Shem's perfect day began with an early morning run, setting the tone for an active and energizing day ahead. Every hour, he would lace up his running shoes and head out for a refreshing jog, exploring different routes and enjoying the tranquility of the deserted streets.

In between his runs, Shem carefully curated a collection of tasks and activities that resonated with his interests and passions. He dedicated time to pursuing his hobbies, whether it was writing, playing a musical instrument, or engaging in creative projects. He indulged in his love for cooking, preparing delicious meals and experimenting with new recipes. He immersed himself in books, diving into captivating stories and expanding his knowledge.

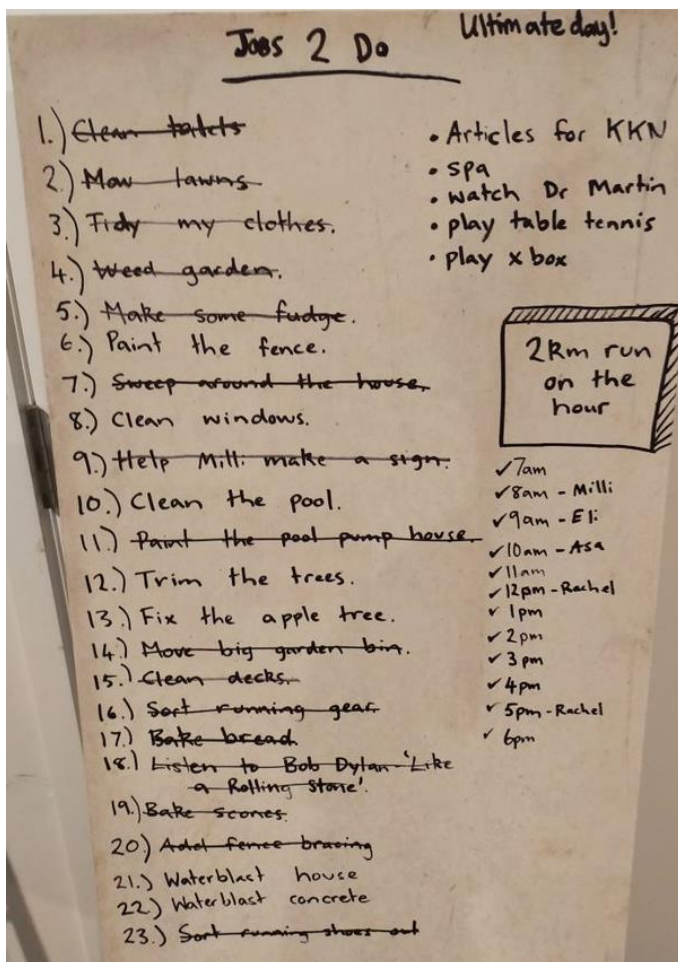
Shem also prioritized self-care and personal growth during his perfect day. He practiced mindfulness and meditation, fostering a sense of calm and clarity amidst the uncertainties of the outside world. He engaged in physical exercise, engaging in yoga or strength training to keep his body strong and healthy.





Throughout the day, Shem found moments of connection and joy with loved ones, whether through video calls, sharing meals together, or engaging in shared activities virtually. He fostered meaningful relationships and cherished the support and love he received from his family and friends.

As the day unfolded, Shem felt a deep sense of satisfaction and fulfillment. He had created a day that allowed him to engage in activities that brought him joy, nourished his body and mind, and fostered a sense of connection and growth. The perfect day became a reminder of the power of intention and seizing the opportunities presented even in challenging times.



A typical day during the lockdown involved Shem and his family following a structured routine. They would start the day by attending online school lessons, and Shem would stay updated on global developments by watching YouTube videos of Donald Trump's often controversial decisions regarding COVID-19 in America. They would then eagerly await the 1 pm briefing by Ashley Bloomfield, New Zealand's Director-General of Health, to get the latest information on the country's COVID-19 situation. Predicting the daily COVID-19 numbers became a family activity, adding a

touch of intrigue to the day. After the morning activities, the afternoons were reserved for relaxation and quality time together.



Despite the adjustments and challenges, Rachel, as an essential worker, continued to go to work each day. Her early morning departures and late afternoon returns made for a demanding schedule. However, the family persevered, supporting one another during these trying times.

The COVID-19 pandemic brought about unique circumstances for Shem and his family, with the shift to online teaching and the need to adapt to a new way of life. Through it all, they found strength and resilience, making the most of their time together while navigating the uncertainties of the global health crisis.

During the global COVID-19 pandemic, 2020 brought forth a new challenge for Shem—one that proved to be remarkably beneficial. This challenge

involved a daily commitment to rise at the precise hour of 5:11 am. Despite the uncertainties and disruptions caused by the pandemic, Shem discovered that this early morning routine provided him with a valuable opportunity to find solace, contemplate, and establish a sense of rhythm in his daily life.



As the world grappled with the unprecedented challenges and changes brought by the pandemic, Shem recognized the importance of carving out personal time and space for self-reflection. By waking up at 5:11 am each morning, he ensured that he had a peaceful and uninterrupted period to gather his thoughts, set intentions for the day, and engage in activities that nurtured his well-being.

In the quiet hours before the rest of the world stirred, Shem found himself in a tranquil sanctuary. With a cup of hot coffee in hand, he would sit by the window, watching as the first rays of sunlight pierced through the darkness, signalling the dawning of a new day. This simple ritual provided him with a sense of clarity and purpose as he contemplated his goals, aspirations, and the gratitude he felt for the blessings in his life.

The early morning hours also presented an opportunity for Shem to engage in activities that nourished his mind, body, and spirit. He would often spend time journaling, expressing his thoughts and emotions on paper, or engaging in mindfulness and meditation practices to cultivate a sense of inner calm and resilience. This dedicated time for personal growth and self-care proved to be invaluable during the challenging times brought about by the pandemic.

Furthermore, Shem discovered that rising early allowed him to establish a consistent and productive rhythm for his days. By starting his mornings with intention and purpose, he felt more energized, focused, and accomplished as he tackled the tasks and responsibilities that lay ahead. Whether it was engaging in work or pursuing personal projects, Shem found that the early hours provided him with a head start and a sense of accomplishment that carried throughout the day.

In the face of adversity, the commitment to waking up at 5:11 am became a source of stability, resilience, and personal growth for Shem. It not only provided him with the time and space to reflect but also served as a reminder that amidst uncertainty, there are opportunities to find stillness, set intentions, and cultivate a positive mindset.

As the year unfolded, Shem discovered the transformative power of embracing the early morning hours. This daily practice became more than just a challenge—it became a pillar of strength and resilience, guiding him through the ups and downs of an unprecedented year. And as the world gradually recovered from the pandemic's grip, Shem carried the lessons and benefits of this practice with him, cherishing the clarity, focus, and personal growth it brought into his life.

In 2020, Shem began to sense that it was time for a new chapter in his professional career at Aquinas College. With a change in leadership and a shift in focus, he felt a desire for a fresh challenge. After serving as the Year 7

and 8 Leader of Learning for a successful period of seven years, he began seeking new opportunities.

To explore different avenues, Shem took on the role of a Kahui Ako Leader in 2020. This position involved working across multiple schools, spending a couple of days each week in various educational settings. It provided him with valuable insights and experiences beyond the confines of a single school.

Throughout his educational journey, Shem had the privilege of spending a remarkable 12 years at Aquinas College. The school boasted a superb academic environment, complemented by a roster of exceptional teachers who left a lasting impact on his life. Among these educators, several individuals stood out, forming strong bonds with Shem and shaping his experiences at the school.

Richard Watson, Marty Lee, Shane Turner, Alan Syme, Ollie Webb, and Peter Braid were among the remarkable teachers who played a significant role in Shem's educational and personal growth. Beyond their commitment to academic excellence, they fostered a supportive and nurturing environment that encouraged students to thrive. Shem admired their dedication, expertise, and ability to engage students in thought-provoking discussions.

One cherished tradition at Aquinas College was the Monday lunchtime gatherings, where Shem and his teachers would gather to discuss the thrilling sporting events that had taken place over the weekend. These conversations became a highlight of his school experience, offering an opportunity for camaraderie and friendly banter. As a fervent Crusaders supporter, Shem found himself engaged in lively debates with his teachers, who often cheered for rival teams such as the Chiefs or the Blues. Despite the occasional friendly rivalry, these discussions fostered a sense of community and camaraderie among the group.

While the Crusaders, Chiefs, and Blues had their fair share of ups and downs, Shem appreciated the shared passion for sports and the joy that came from

supporting one's favourite teams. The Monday lunchtime gatherings provided a space where victories were celebrated, defeats were analysed, and a sense of camaraderie prevailed.

Embarking on the Abel Tasman walk in 2020 was a true highlight for the Banbury family, creating lasting memories and strengthening their bond. With everyone in the family responsible for packing their tent, food, and clothing, it became a wonderful team effort, showcasing their unity and shared excitement.

Starting their journey at Mairehau Beach, the family embarked on a four-day walk, surrounded by the breathtaking beauty of the Abel Tasman National Park. The sun graced their adventure, enhancing the picturesque landscape and creating an idyllic backdrop for their family holiday.

Amidst the serenity of the evenings spent camping under the starry sky, an unexpected event added a touch of drama to their experience. One evening, a fellow tramper suffered a back injury and required immediate medical attention. The urgency of the situation led to a late-night call for a helicopter rescue.

At around 11 pm, as darkness enveloped the camping ground, the distinct sound of a helicopter reverberated through the air. The roaring noise filled the night, capturing the attention of the campers. Yet, amidst the commotion and buzzing helicopter blades, two members of the Banbury family, Eli and Asa, remained blissfully unaware, sound asleep throughout the entire ordeal.

The incident became a light-hearted family anecdote, illustrating the profound ability of Eli and Asa to sleep soundly through the most extraordinary circumstances. It became a humorous reminder of their unwavering ability to find peace and tranquillity, even in the face of unexpected disruptions.



Walking the Abel Tasman not only provided the Banbury family with an incredible adventure and the opportunity to immerse themselves in the stunning natural surroundings but also gifted them with cherished family moments and amusing stories to be shared for years to come. It was a testament to the strength of their bond and their shared love for adventure, creating lasting memories etched in their hearts and minds.

Beyond the realm of sports, the bond between Shem and his teachers extended beyond the classroom. Richard, Marty, Shane, Ollie, and Peter were mentors, role models, and trusted confidants who genuinely cared about Shem's well-being and academic success. Their guidance and support helped shape his character, instilling values of perseverance, intellectual curiosity, and empathy.



Reflecting on his 12-year journey at Aquinas College, Shem treasured the memories made with these exceptional teachers. Their impact stretched far beyond the academic realm, leaving an indelible mark on his personal and intellectual development. The Monday lunchtime discussions served as a testament to the meaningful connections forged at the school, reminding Shem of the importance of shared experiences and the lasting bonds that can be formed through mutual interests and a sense of belonging.

During Shem's heartfelt farewell speech at Aquinas College, he decided to unleash his creativity in full force. As a symbolic gesture to commemorate their time together, he presented the school with a lively and colourful budgie that he and Milli had acquired during a memorable trip to Rotorua.

Intrigued by the school's newly developed mantra of Belong, Believe, Become, Shem saw an undeniable connection between the vibrant budgie and the essence of this inspiring message. Just as the budgie's presence brings a sense of joy and liveliness to any space it inhabits, Shem believed that embracing the values of belonging, believing, and becoming can ignite a similar transformative energy within the school community.



With a touch of whimsy and a dash of creativity, Shem's parting gift aimed to symbolize the spirit of growth, potential, and unity that defines Aquinas College. As the budgie perched atop its newfound home, it served as a visual reminder of the limitless possibilities that lie ahead for each student and the collective strength that emerges when individuals truly belong, believe in themselves, and embrace their journey of becoming.

As he moved forward in life, Shem carried with him the lessons, friendships, and cherished memories from his time at Aquinas College. The influence of Richard, Marty, Shane, Ollie, and Peter continued to guide his path, inspiring him to approach challenges with resilience, embrace lifelong learning, and value the importance of genuine connections.

In 2021, Shem made the decision to pursue a new leadership role and applied for the position of Deputy Principal at Mount Maunganui Intermediate (MMI). This intermediate school boasted a role of around 700 students and held a special connection within the family as Judy Coster, Shem's mother-in-law, had served as the librarian there for a remarkable 15 years.

With enthusiasm and determination, Shem competed for the position and emerged successful. He embraced his new role as Deputy Principal at MMI, ready to contribute his knowledge and skills to the school's educational journey. The opportunity to work in a larger intermediate setting brought forth fresh challenges and opportunities for professional growth.

In the eventful year of 2021, while the world grappled with various global issues, Shem embarked on a unique and ambitious musical quest. On the very first day of the year, he set out on a mission that would make him the first person in the world to listen to Bob Dylan's timeless masterpiece, "Like a Rolling Stone," every single day for an entire year. Widely regarded as one of the greatest songs of all time by Rolling Stone Magazine, this endeavour represented a deep appreciation for Dylan's artistry and a personal dedication to exploring the nuances of this iconic composition.

As the world faced numerous challenges and significant events unfolded, Shem's daily ritual of experiencing "Like a Rolling Stone" offered a respite from the chaos and a moment of connection with the profound artistry of Bob Dylan. The song's poetic lyrics, Dylan's distinctive voice, and the captivating instrumentation became a constant companion, offering solace, inspiration, and a renewed sense of wonder.

Through the ups and downs of the year, Shem found solace and inspiration in the timeless melodies and thought-provoking lyrics of "Like a Rolling Stone." The song's introspective and evocative nature allowed him to delve deeper into its layers of meaning, discovering new interpretations and connections with each listen. From the introspective opening lines to the powerful chorus that reverberated with emotion, Shem experienced the song's transformative power daily.

While the world around him faced a myriad of challenges, Shem's commitment to this musical odyssey brought him a sense of continuity and purpose. It became a personal journey of exploration, self-reflection, and appreciation for the art that has resonated with generations of listeners. Through the ups and downs of the year, the song served as a constant reminder of the timeless and universal power of music to transcend the difficulties of life.

"Like a Rolling Stone" now holds a special place in Shem's heart as one of the greatest songs ever recorded. Released in 1965, the song's revolutionary lyrics and captivating melody spoke to him on a profound level, resonating with his own quest for meaning and social change.

As Shem embarked on his ambitious musical goal in 2021, he set out to listen to "Like a Rolling Stone" every day for an entire year, becoming the first person in the world to undertake such a challenge. The song's timeless relevance and universal appeal made it the perfect soundtrack to accompany Shem's introspective moments and reflections throughout the year.



Through each daily listening, Shem found himself drawn into the song's emotive delivery and Bob Dylan's raw, gravelly voice. The lyrics, with their exploration of alienation and the search for individuality, struck a chord within Shem's own journey of self-discovery. "Like a Rolling Stone" became a source of inspiration and a reminder of the power of music to evoke deep emotions and provoke thought.

As the final notes of "Like a Rolling Stone" played on the last day of the year, Shem reflected on the incredible journey he had undertaken. Through this musical endeavour, he had not only deepened his understanding and connection with the iconic song but also discovered a renewed appreciation for the beauty and significance of music in his life. This year-long dedication to Bob Dylan's masterpiece had provided a unique perspective, allowing Shem to unravel the layers of meaning, emotions, and sheer brilliance embedded within the song.

It was also in 2021 that Shem attempted to grow a moustache. As someone who typically preferred a clean-shaven look, this decision was fuelled by a

combination of peer pressure from his work colleagues and a desire to step out of his comfort zone.

Initially hesitant, Shem decided to give it a try and see where the journey would take him. As the days turned into weeks, he witnessed a transformation unfolding on his upper lip. The once bare space gradually sprouted a magnificent moustache, defying his initial reservations and surprising him with the results.

To his own astonishment, Shem discovered that the moustache suited him remarkably well. The facial hair became a defining feature, adding a touch of sophistication and character to his appearance. It became a topic of conversation among his colleagues and friends, sparking admiration and curiosity.

As the moustache grew, Shem grew more confident in his new look. He began to embrace the unique style it brought to his overall image and enjoyed the attention it garnered. It became a conversation starter and a symbol of his willingness to step outside of his comfort zone.

Beyond the physical transformation, the experience of growing a moustache taught Shem a valuable lesson about embracing change and challenging his preconceived notions. It reminded him of the importance of trying new things, even if they initially seem unconventional or outside of his comfort zone. It served as a reminder that sometimes the most surprising and rewarding experiences come from stepping into the unknown.

Although the moustache was eventually shaved off, the experience left an indelible mark on Shem. It served as a reminder of his ability to adapt, embrace change, and explore new aspects of his identity. The stunning results of the moustache challenge became a symbol of his growth and willingness to embrace new experiences, leaving him with a newfound sense of confidence and a willingness to embrace future challenges with an open mind.



It was during this time that Shem's three children began to thrive. Asa, a true water enthusiast, has always had a deep affinity for swimming. His journey began at Liz Van Welie, where he first dipped his toes into the pool of possibilities. With unwavering dedication and countless hours of training, Asa's skills have flourished, propelling him to become a nationally ranked swimmer.

In a remarkable feat, 2020 marked a pivotal moment in Asa's swimming career as he ascended to the title of National Champion. Standing tall at the U13 Boys 200m backstroke event, he claimed victory with an impressive display of skill and determination. His display so impressive that it was like no one else was in the pool. Not stopping there, Asa further showcased his talent by securing a remarkable 3rd place finish in the highly competitive 100m final.



Continuing his upward trajectory, May 2021 saw Asa achieving a remarkable 2nd place in the Div 11 New Zealand Championships, competing fiercely in the U14 boys category. His dedication to his craft and unwavering focus have positioned him as a force to be reckoned with in the swimming arena.

Eli, on the other hand, found his sporting success in the realm of both football and cricket. His prowess on the football field shone brightly as he donned the colours of Blue Rovers, ultimately triumphing in the local competition. With Shem providing his expertise as a coach, Eli's team basked in the glory of victory.





A memorable moment in Eli's cricketing journey occurred on the 26th of February when he accomplished a significant milestone—scoring his first century in a thrilling T20 match against Bethlehem College. This remarkable achievement cemented Eli's status as a formidable batsman, leaving an indelible mark on the cricketing landscape.

Meanwhile, Milli, with her innate passion for the arts, found herself drawn to the world of netball. Although she enjoyed the camaraderie and excitement on the court, it was in the realm of the arts that her true calling resided. In 2022, Milli embarked on an ambitious endeavour by founding the Sunny Side Up Children's Film Festival, dedicated to showcasing the creative talents of young filmmakers.



The inaugural festival introduced a unique lineup of movies, albeit with some eyebrow-raising selections that danced with subtle innuendo. Fortunately, the innocence of the majority of the audience shielded them from grasping the hidden meanings. Undeterred by the initial challenges, Milli's vision for

the festival grew even stronger in 2023 as she successfully sold out five sessions at the esteemed Historic Village cinema, further solidifying the festival's place within the community.

As each sibling embraces their unique passions and excels in their chosen pursuits, the Banbury household becomes a vibrant tapestry of talent, creativity, and sporting achievement. Together, they inspire and support one another, forming an unbreakable bond rooted in shared experiences and the pursuit of excellence.

Transitioning to Mount Maunganui Intermediate marked an exciting new phase in Shem's career. He looked forward to making a positive impact on the students, staff, and wider school community, building upon the strong foundations laid during his time at Aquinas College and embarking on this new adventure with optimism and dedication.

Mount Maunganui Intermediate became a significant chapter in Shem's career as an educator. Joining the school in a leadership position, he had the opportunity to work alongside a fabulous Senior Leadership Team, fostering his skills as a leader and making a positive impact on the school community. The journey at Mount Maunganui Intermediate was marked by growth, collaboration, and memorable moments that would shape Shem's experiences.

However, amidst the numerous achievements and successes, there was one incident that stood out and became an unforgettable part of Shem's time at the school. It happened in July 2022, on the day of the school photos. Little did Shem know that fate had a humorous twist in store for him.

As the students lined up one by one to have their individual photos taken, Shem eagerly awaited his turn, completely unaware of what was about to unfold. The camera clicked, capturing what would later be known as "probably the worst individual photo" ever taken in the history of school photos.

Whether it was the awkward pose, the unfortunate timing, or a combination of both, the resulting photograph was a sight to behold. It quickly became a running joke among the staff and students of Mount Maunganui Intermediate, sparking laughter and camaraderie whenever it was mentioned.



Shem, being the good sport that he was, embraced the humour and joined in on the laughter. Instead of shying away from the infamous photo, he proudly shared the story and allowed it to become a light-hearted reminder of the joy and camaraderie that permeated the school's culture.



The "worst individual photo" became a cherished memory, a testament to the vibrant spirit and sense of community that thrived at Mount Maunganui Intermediate. It served as a reminder that even in the midst of professional growth and leadership, it was important to find humour and joy in the little things, forging connections and creating lasting memories along the way.

In 2022, Shem shifted his challenge to an academic pursuit, embarking on an ambitious quest to read the entire First Edition of the Encyclopaedia of New Zealand. This monumental task involved delving into the wealth of knowledge encompassed within the three thick volumes, which were first written in 1966 and edited by the esteemed Dr. Alexander Hare McLintock.

The Encyclopaedia of New Zealand, a notable publishing success of its time, has since become a fundamental reference work about the country's history, culture, and society. Its extensive contents include over 1,800 articles, 900 biographies, and contributions from 359 esteemed authors. With a staggering total of 2,537 pages, the encyclopaedia presented a vast repository of facts, insights, and stories waiting to be explored.

Throughout this scholarly endeavour, Shem found himself engrossed in numerous captivating entries. From the intriguing accounts of historic duels to the enthralling biography of Kimble Bent, a man entangled in an unconventional marital situation, each page of the encyclopaedia revealed a rich tapestry of New Zealand's past and present.

One of Shem's favourite entries was the thought-provoking section on "Women's Role in New Zealand," which offered a captivating glimpse into the historical and social dynamics that have shaped the country's gender roles and progress. As he delved deeper into these pages, he found himself pondering the evolving narratives of women's contributions and challenges in the nation's development.

In the duels section of the encyclopaedia, Shem stumbled upon two intriguing accounts that captured his attention:



*Brewer v. Kelly (1840): This duel featured a dispute between William Brewer, a solicitor, and John Kelly, a surveyor. The disagreement arose when Brewer became irritated by the teasing about his association with a young lady and threatened to challenge anyone who continued to make such remarks. Kelly, undeterred, persisted with the banter, leading to a duel on the picturesque Oneroa Beach in Kororareka. During the intense exchange, a shot from Kelly's firearm grazed part of Brewer's wig, leaving a vivid and memorable reminder of the confrontation.*

*Gisborne v. Blackmore (1850): The second duel that captured Shem's attention took place in Auckland on September 14, 1850. The conflict originated at a social gathering when an orange thrown in jest rebounded from one guest's head and inadvertently struck another in the face. The offended party demanded an apology from the individual responsible for the throw, but no apology was given. The situation escalated to a duel between William Gisborne, a Justice of the Peace at the time, and a man named Blackmore. Fortunately, neither participant suffered physical harm during the duel. However, the public expressed strong disapproval of their actions, leading to Gisborne's suspension from the Commission of the Peace by the Executive Council for a period of time.*

These captivating duels, with their unique circumstances and consequences, provided Shem with a glimpse into the historical practice of settling disputes through personal combat.

The pursuit of reading the entire Encyclopaedia of New Zealand proved to be a mentally stimulating and intellectually rewarding challenge for Shem. Immersed in a world of comprehensive knowledge and cultural insights, he relished the opportunity to enrich his understanding of New Zealand's past, people, and society.



In the pages of his autobiography, this academic journey held a significant place, representing Shem's relentless curiosity for knowledge and his dedication to embracing new challenges that expanded his horizons. The academic focus of 2022 became a pivotal chapter in the narrative of Shem's lifelong pursuit of learning and personal growth.

In 2022, Shem faced a challenging health situation that demanded immense strength and resilience. Amidst the ongoing Covid pandemic, Shem's appendix unexpectedly became inflamed, causing him significant discomfort and distress. Unfortunately, Rachel was also battling Covid at the time, adding to the complexity of the situation.

Despite the difficult circumstances, Shem summoned all his courage and determination to seek medical attention promptly. With Rachel's support and the determination to overcome the obstacles before him, he managed to make his way to the hospital. Once there, the medical staff swiftly took charge, understanding the urgency of the situation.

Rushed into the Accident and Emergency area, Shem underwent an emergency operation to have his appendix removed. The date was March 17th, and the clock showed 10:15 pm when the skilled surgical team began their work. In this crucial moment, Shem put his trust in the expertise of the medical professionals, knowing that his health and well-being depended on their precision and skill.

The operation turned out to be a success, thanks to the efforts of the medical team, and Shem's appendix was removed without any complications. The error-free operation brought great relief to Shem and his loved ones, knowing that he was in capable hands during such a critical time.

Recovering from the surgery and healing from the ordeal, Shem demonstrated incredible resilience and perseverance. The experience of facing a health crisis amidst the Covid pandemic was undoubtedly





challenging, but Shem's unwavering spirit and the support of his loved ones helped him through the process.

This health journey became a profound reminder of the importance of taking care of oneself and valuing good health. Shem's positive attitude and determination to overcome the hurdles set before him showcased his inner strength and the power of resilience in the face of adversity. The successful surgery and recovery served as a testament to the strength of the human spirit, even during the most trying times.

In the years 2022 and 2023, Shem experienced a shift in his sporting focus. While his passion for triathlon seemed to wane, he found himself drawn towards other sports and exploring new athletic endeavours.

In the tapestry of Shem's life, woven with threads of love and family, a special section is reserved for his beloved nieces and nephews. They bring an undeniable vibrancy and youthful spirit that light up his world. Among them, two remarkable individuals stand out with their unique talents and achievements: Daniel and Jonathan Coster.

Daniel Coster, born to Andrew and Wendy on the 20th of April 2006, possesses an extraordinary passion for cricket. From an early age, his potential as an opening batsman and leg spin bowler was evident. Daniel's natural talent, combined with his unwavering dedication and hard work, led him to become a highly capable player. The synergy between Daniel and Shem on the cricket field created a formidable opening partnership for Aquinas College in 2023, leaving opponents in awe of their skill and teamwork. Their combined efforts brought success and pride to their school, forging memories that would be treasured for a lifetime.

Jonathan Coster, born to Andrew and Wendy on the 14th of August 2008, shines brightly in the realm of science. In Year 6, he achieved a remarkable feat by securing the coveted 1st place in the Australian Science Competition. Jonathan's inquisitive mind, thirst for knowledge, and meticulous approach

to scientific inquiry set him apart. His passion for unravelling the mysteries of the natural world and his dedication to honing his scientific skills make him a true inspiration to his peers and family. With every experiment and discovery, Jonathan's journey in the field of science continues to unfold, leaving a trail of excellence in his wake.

Nate Sutcliffe, born on the 9th of September to proud parents Shaun and Ruth, has honed his skills in the art of Karate. From a young age, Nate displayed an innate talent for the martial arts, capturing the essence of discipline, focus, and self-control. With unwavering dedication and countless hours of training, he has become an expert in this ancient practice. Nate's precision, agility, and unwavering determination in the dojo have earned him respect and admiration among his peers and instructors alike. As he continues to advance in his martial arts journey, Nate embodies the spirit of perseverance and the pursuit of excellence.

Kayden Sutcliffe, born on the 7th of May, possesses a livewire spirit that electrifies every room he enters. This young dynamo, with an endless supply of energy and enthusiasm, is destined to leave a lasting impression. With a mischievous twinkle in his eye and an adventurous spirit, Kayden's charisma is undeniable. His boundless curiosity and fearlessness set the stage for great things to come. It comes as no surprise that many envision Kayden embracing a future as a stuntman in the glimmering lights of Hollywood. His zest for life and fearlessness in the face of challenges make him a force to be reckoned with.

Sophia Sutcliffe, born on the 13th of January, radiates joy and warmth with her vibrant ginger hair and spirited personality. As the apple of her parents' eyes, Sophia is adored and cherished by her family. Her presence adds an extra dose of sunshine and laughter to every gathering. It is her infectious laughter and genuine kindness that truly define her character. With each passing day, Sophia's innate qualities of compassion and empathy shine through, promising a future filled with love and nurturing relationships.

Who can forget Lily, Caleb, and Leo Coster. Born to Stephen and Karen Coster, these three remarkable individuals bring their unique gifts, aspirations, and spirited personalities, further enriching the tapestry of the family's legacy.

Lily Coster, born on the 1st of November, exudes intelligence and a deep passion for the written word. From an early age, Lily has been captivated by the beauty of language, finding solace and inspiration in the written works that transport her to different worlds. With an unwavering commitment to honing her skills, Lily aspires to become a journalist, using her talent for storytelling to shed light on important issues and evoke positive change. Her keen intellect, combined with her natural creativity, imbue her words with power and authenticity, making her an emerging voice that demands to be heard.

Caleb Coster, born on the 24th of November, stands as an ardent supporter and devoted enthusiast of West Ham Football Club. From the time he could kick a ball, Caleb has embraced the sport with unbridled passion and dedication. Beyond the boundaries of a mere spectator, he possesses an innate understanding of the game, demonstrating wisdom beyond his years. Caleb's unwavering loyalty to his beloved football club serves as a testament to his commitment and love for the sport, inspiring those around him with his infectious enthusiasm and deep appreciation for teamwork.

Leo Coster, born on the 27th of December, radiates vibrant energy and an irrepressible, cheeky nature. With his mischievous grin and an insatiable thirst for adventure, Leo is always ready to dive headfirst into the excitement of life. Whether it's exploring new places, embarking on imaginative escapades, or seeking out new experiences, Leo is the spark that ignites any gathering. His zest for life and his ability to find joy in even the simplest of moments make him a magnetic force, drawing others into his orbit and reminding them to embrace the whimsical side of life.

In the chilly embrace of Christchurch, two vibrant souls bring warmth and joy to the Banbury family—Harry and Mila. As they navigate their way through childhood, each with their unique personalities, they contribute their own special flair to the family dynamic.

Harry, the quintessential oldest child, exudes a sense of responsibility and maturity beyond his years. With a heart full of compassion, he embraces his role as an older brother, always looking out for his younger siblings. Harry's love for cars fuels his excitement and he eagerly accompanies his dad to events, immersing himself in the world of engines, horsepower, and the thrill of the road.

Mila, on the other hand, radiates a friendly and engaging nature that effortlessly draws people into her world. Blessed with a kind and giving spirit, she eagerly lends a helping hand around the house, delighting in the joy of contributing to the family's well-being. Mila's creative side shines brightly as she finds solace and fulfilment in the world of arts and crafts, often sharing these special moments with her beloved nana, fostering a bond that spans generations.

As Shem observes the accomplishments of his nieces and nephews, he is filled with immense pride and joy. Their achievements serve as a testament to their individual strengths and the nurturing support of their parents. Beyond their accomplishments, Daniel and Jonathan embody qualities that extend far beyond the realm of sports and academics. They are kind-hearted, compassionate individuals who strive to make a positive impact on the world around them.

Through shared experiences, laughter, and heartfelt moments, Shem cherishes the bond he shares with his nieces and nephews. Whether it's cheering them on from the sidelines of a cricket match or celebrating their victories and milestones, the love and support between uncle and nieces/nephews remain unwavering. Their presence in his life adds a sense

of wonder and renewal, reminding Shem of the enduring power of family bonds.

As the next generation takes centre stage, Shem eagerly anticipates the countless chapters yet to be written in their lives. With their unique talents and unwavering determination, Daniel, Jonathan, and their fellow nieces and nephews are poised to leave their mark on the world. Their journey of growth, discovery, and resilience serves as a reminder of the boundless potential that lies within each one of us.

One of the notable highlights in 2022/23 was Shem's participation in cricket. He had the opportunity to join the Aquinas College 1st XI cricket team in the 2023 season, playing alongside his sons, Asa and Eli. In a memorable match, Shem showcased his skills and determination, scoring an impressive 64 runs on a Saturday. The season itself proved to be a resounding success for the Aquinas College team, culminating in their qualification for the Reserve Grade Plate Final. This achievement granted Shem, Asa, and Eli the remarkable experience of playing under the lights at Bay Oval, creating lasting memories despite the ultimate outcome of the game.



Additionally, Shem rediscovered his passion for golf during this period. He decided to join the Mount Golf Club, rekindling his connection with the sport and embracing the challenges and joys it presented. Engaging in golf

provided Shem with an opportunity for leisure, physical activity, and personal growth, as he honed his skills on the golf course.

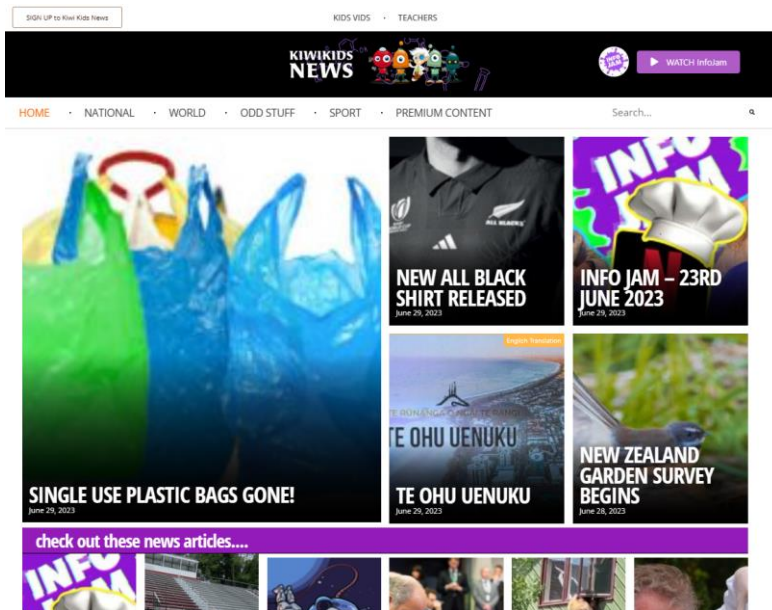
These shifts in sporting focus allowed Shem to explore new avenues, challenge himself in different ways, and find fulfilment through diverse athletic pursuits. The joy of playing cricket with his sons and rekindling his love for golf enriched his life beyond the realm of triathlon, fostering a well-rounded approach to sports and personal fulfilment.

During Shem's remarkable journey, another significant aspect of his life unfolded with the exponential growth of the Kiwi Kids News website. Year after year, the platform expanded its reach, becoming an invaluable resource for Kiwi children aged 9-14. Driven by a passion for providing young readers with informative and engaging content, the website delivered a steady stream of 4 to 5 news articles daily, covering a wide range of topics including National, World, Sport, and Odd Stuff news. The commitment to delivering quality content extended beyond news articles, as the platform also offered additional features such as a comprehensive homework booklet and a captivating weekly feature article, exclusively available to premium content subscribers.

However, the pivotal moment for Kiwi Kids News arrived in 2023, when it secured crucial funding from New Zealand On Air to develop te reo Māori content. This injection of support provided a much-needed boost to the small business that Shem was passionately running. It was during this transformative phase that Kiwi Kids News truly became a family affair. Each member of Shem's family played a vital role in shaping the website's success. Milli took charge of creating captivating social media content, skilfully engaging the young audience. Eli, with his creative prowess, managed the videos section of the website, providing an immersive and visually appealing experience for the young visitors. Asa, with a keen eye for interaction, diligently monitored and responded to comments, fostering a positive and inclusive community atmosphere. Rachel, the quiz Queen, excelled in her

role, curating the immensely popular Friday quiz, a weekly event eagerly anticipated by approximately 5,000 students across New Zealand.

Driven by their collective efforts, Kiwi Kids News flourished, growing into a major website that attracted an impressive average of 50,000 page views per day across its three sites. The impact of Kiwi Kids News extended far beyond mere numbers, with nearly 500 schools and learning institutions recognizing the value it brought to their students' educational journey, eagerly subscribing to the platform's valuable resources. The website's repository boasted an extensive collection of approximately 9,000 articles, encompassing a diverse range of topics that catered to the varied interests of young readers. It was through these thoughtfully curated articles that Kiwi Kids News fostered lively and thought-provoking discussions, as evidenced by the staggering count of 70,000 comments.



The growth of Kiwi Kids News was a testament to Shem's unwavering dedication to providing a safe and informative online space for young New

Zealanders. Beyond the dissemination of news, the platform empowered children with the knowledge and tools to become informed citizens, nurturing their critical thinking skills, digital literacy, and fostering a sense of belonging within the broader community. Through the collaborative efforts of Shem, his family, and their unwavering commitment to serving the educational needs of Kiwi kids, Kiwi Kids News became a beacon of knowledge and inspiration, leaving an indelible impact on countless young minds across the country.

In 2023, Shem decided to embark on a unique and eye-opening challenge that would broaden his understanding and empathy towards others. After years of focusing on personal goals, he felt it was time to embrace a challenge that transcended his own experiences. Inspired by the concept of gender inclusivity and the notion of breaking societal norms, Shem made the decision to explore a different perspective by adopting a habit traditionally associated with the female gender.

His goal for the year was to embrace the practice of sitting down while peeing, a daily routine performed by many women. Known in Germany as a "Sitzpinkler", this piqued his curiosity about the cultural variations in bathroom habits and societal expectations.

Recognizing the importance of empathy and understanding, Shem aimed to experience firsthand what it feels like to be in the shoes of those who identify as her/she/girl/female. By willingly adopting this practice, he aimed to gain a deeper appreciation for the experiences and challenges faced by others daily.

Intrigued by the potential benefits, Shem delved into the research surrounding sitting while peeing. A comprehensive study conducted in 2014 on patients with Lower Urinary Tract Symptoms (LUTS) revealed a positive correlation between the sitting position and an improved urodynamic profile. Furthermore, a meta-analysis of multiple studies conducted between 1999 and 2012 showcased surprising advantages of peeing while seated. These



benefits included a significantly lower post-void residual volume in the bladder, an increase in the maximum urinary flow rate, and a decrease in total voiding time.



With his commitment to this unique challenge, Shem aimed not only to challenge societal norms but also to foster a greater sense of understanding and compassion towards different perspectives. He recognized the value of stepping outside his comfort zone and embracing experiences that could broaden his horizons and contribute to a more inclusive and empathetic society.

Shem found great enjoyment and fulfilment in taking on the challenge of working at Mount Maunganui Intermediate. The bustling school environment, with its 700 Year 7/8 students, provided a vibrant and dynamic

setting for Shem to thrive in. Each day brought new opportunities to engage with the students, inspire their learning, and contribute to their overall growth.

Collaborating closely with Principal Melissa Nelson and the Deputy Principals, Debbie Howell and Renee Thurston, Shem found a supportive and dedicated team. Together, they worked tirelessly to create a positive and nurturing learning environment for the students, fostering their academic, social, and emotional development.

While many memorable moments filled Shem's first year at the school, one incident stood out above the rest: the infamous "world's worst school photo" taken on June 17, 2022. It was a humorous event that brought laughter and amusement to both students and staff alike. Despite its title, the photo became a cherished memory, showcasing the fun and light-heartedness that permeated the school community.

Shem's role as an educator at Mount Maunganui Intermediate allowed him to make a meaningful impact on the lives of young learners. From leading engaging lessons to providing guidance and support, Shem embraced the responsibility of shaping young minds and nurturing their potential. The vibrant atmosphere and the camaraderie among the staff and students made each day at the school an enjoyable and rewarding experience for Shem.

This book wouldn't be a true account if it didn't included one amazing facts about Shem. Yes, you guessed it! Amid 770,085,713 confirmed cases and 6,956,173 confirmed deaths worldwide, he somehow managed to evade the elusive grasp of Covid-19.

Maybe it was sheer luck, impeccable handwashing skills, or perhaps it's his unwavering commitment to a balanced diet of humour and optimism. We will never know.

Rachel's journey as a pharmacist was a testament to her unwavering commitment to personal growth, professional excellence, and her willingness to help others. Over the years, she had consistently pursued opportunities to upskill and expand her knowledge in the field of pharmacy. Her dedication paid off when she completed her Diploma in Clinical Pharmacy, an achievement crowned with the top-of-class award—an acknowledgment of her outstanding academic abilities.

In July of 2023, Rachel decided to embark on a new chapter in her career, leaving behind her long-time position at Brookfield Pharmacy, where she had dedicated nearly two decades of her life. Her destination was the Tauranga Hospital, a transition that marked a significant shift in her career path. Rachel took on the role of a pharmacist in the public health system, where she would play a crucial role in helping and caring for those in need.

This bold move showcased Rachel's strength of character and determination to explore new horizons and broaden her professional outlook. Her willingness to step out of her comfort zone and embrace fresh challenges was a testament to her resilience and the remarkable qualities that had always defined her. As she ventured into this new role, Rachel's impact on the healthcare community and her ability to make a difference in people's lives would undoubtedly continue to shine through.

In September 2023, the Banbury family embarked on an unforgettable adventure to the tropical paradise of Samoa. For seven blissful days, Shem, Rachel, Asa, Eli, and Milli soaked up the sun, surf, and Samoan culture, creating cherished memories that would last a lifetime.

Their journey through this South Pacific gem took them to some of Samoa's most enchanting natural wonders. The family marveled at the Giant Clams, colossal creatures of the sea, with colours so vibrant they seemed almost otherworldly.

Next on their itinerary was "The Trench," a geological marvel known for its stunning beauty. With crystal-clear waters and a vibrant marine ecosystem, it was a snorkeler's paradise. The family swam among the colourful fish and explored the underwater wonders, creating a symphony of aquatic memories.

But perhaps one of the most magical experiences was their visit to a sensational freshwater spring hidden beneath a local church. As they descended into the cool, clear waters, they felt a profound connection to the heart of Samoan culture and spirituality.

Throughout their Samoan sojourn, the Banbury family revelled in the warmth of both the tropical sun and the genuine hospitality of the Samoan people. They indulged in local cuisine, danced to traditional music, and basked in the beauty of this island paradise.

This holiday wasn't just a getaway; it was a celebration of family, adventure, and the bonds that grew stronger with each shared experience. As the Banbury family returned home, their hearts were filled with the beauty of Samoa and the love they had for each other. The memories forged under the Samoan sun would forever be etched in their family's story.



During our unforgettable trip to Samoa, we had the incredible opportunity to attend a mesmerizing cultural evening. As the vibrant show unfolded before our eyes, something extraordinary happened. Some of the local lady dancers extended a warm invitation to Asa, our very own family star, to join them on the stage. With some hesitation, he embraced the moment and embarked on a journey through a selection of traditional Samoan dances.

Asa's performance was nothing short of sensational. His passion and enthusiasm for embracing the local culture shone brightly. The audience couldn't help but be captivated by his grace and dedication. As the evening drew to a close, it was clear that something magical had happened. Asa was not only recognized for his remarkable performance but was also crowned the overall winner of the evening.

The heartfelt applause echoed through the night as he received a well-deserved kiss from the lady dancers. To top it all off, he was presented with a charming prize, a tangible reminder of a night that would forever hold a special place in his heart.



## -Revelation -



As Shem reflects upon the 44 incredible years that have unfolded, it's astounding to quantify life in days and minutes. At 16,436 days, or a staggering 23,667,840 minutes, my journey through this world has been a tapestry of experiences, a whirlwind of emotions, and an ever-evolving quest for understanding. But as he stands at the threshold of my final chapter, aptly titled "Revelation," he can't help but wonder what the future holds, not just for himself but for those closest to his heart. Life, as they say, is a relentless march forward, and the script of our future remains unwritten, awaiting the

ink of time to shape its narrative. In this chapter, we will dive into the realms of prophecy, hopes, and dreams, exploring what destiny may have in store for me and my beloved family. So, dear reader, fasten your seatbelt, for the final chapter of this epic journey is about to unfold.

As Shem embarks on the second half of my life, filled with excitement and anticipation, Shem will find solace in the knowledge that my dedication to a healthy lifestyle will continue to shape his journey. By prioritizing his well-being and making mindful choices, Shem will create a future that is fulfilling and abundant.

From the age of 45 to 65, a multitude of experiences and opportunities await you, encompassing both your professional and personal life. As the Deputy Principal at Mount Maunganui Intermediate, you will continue to make significant contributions to the educational field and play a crucial role in shaping young minds.

Professionally, he will see remarkable growth and recognition for his dedication and leadership. His innovative approaches to education will inspire both colleagues and students, fostering a positive and engaging learning environment. Shem's passion for empowering young individuals through education will lead to further advancements in your career, such as assuming the role of Principal or taking on broader responsibilities within the education sector.

Additionally, Shem's sporting achievements will continue to bring you fulfilment and pride. Whether it be excelling in your favourite sport, participating in local competitions, or engaging in recreational activities, he will maintain a strong connection to the world of sports. His commitment to a healthy and active lifestyle will serve as an inspiration to others, and he may even take on coaching or mentoring roles to share his knowledge and passion.

Regarding Shem’s family home at 23 St Thomas Ave, after residing there for five years, Shem and Rachel will carefully assess their future housing needs and preferences. The decision to sell or retain the property will be influenced by a variety of factors, including changes in family dynamics, evolving aspirations, and market conditions. While it is challenging to provide precise dates, a potential timeline could unfold as follows:

By the tenth year of residing at 23 St Thomas Ave, Shem and Rachel may find themselves evaluating the space and considering potential modifications to accommodate their changing lifestyle. This could involve renovating certain areas of the house to better suit their evolving needs, such as creating a home office or expanding communal areas for family gatherings.





Around the fifteenth year, as their children grow older and move out to pursue their own lives, they might find that the size and upkeep of the property no longer align with their preferences. At this stage, the idea of downsizing may become more appealing, allowing Shem and Rachel to simplify your living arrangements and potentially free up financial resources for other endeavours.

By the twentieth year, Shem and Rachel could embark on a new chapter in your lives, contemplating a change in residence that better aligns with their desires and aspirations. This could involve relocating to a different neighbourhood, city, or even considering a different type of property, such as a condominium or a smaller house that requires less maintenance.

Ultimately, the decision regarding the fate of 23 St Thomas Ave will be driven by Shem and Rachel's family's well-being and comfort. It may involve discussions and considerations about financial aspects, lifestyle preferences, and the potential for new opportunities that a different living situation can bring.



Furthermore, Shem's family will continue to be a source of immense love, support, and fulfilment. Celebrating milestones, creating lasting memories, and cherishing family traditions will remain at the heart of your relationships. The bond between Shem, and his spouse Rachel, and their children will only grow stronger as they navigate life's triumphs and challenges together.

In summary, the years between 45 and 65 will be marked by professional growth, sporting achievements, and a deepening of family bonds. Shem's dedication to education, commitment to a healthy lifestyle, and unwavering love for your family will shape this stage of your life, bringing fulfilment, joy, and a sense of purpose.

Considering the current trends and my commitment to health, it is projected that Shem will retire around the age of 65, enjoying the fruits of his labour and embracing new opportunities. Retirement will provide him with the freedom to explore his passions more deeply and engage in activities that bring him joy. As a sporty and adventurous individual, Shem will embrace outdoor pursuits, such as hiking, biking, and exploring the natural wonders of New Zealand. Shem may also seek opportunities to give back to my community by volunteering and mentoring young athletes.

His beloved wife, Rachel, will continue to be his partner and pillar of support throughout the coming years. Together, we will cherish the milestones and experiences that life unfolds before them.

As the days turn into years and our family's journey unfolds, one thing remains steadfast and certain: Rachel will continue to be the unwavering source of strength for the whole family. Her boundless love for their children will only grow stronger with time, serving as the cornerstone upon which the family thrives.

As their children navigate life's winding paths, Rachel will stand as their greatest supporter, a beacon of encouragement, wisdom, and love. Her

resilience and determination will remain unyielding, a testament to her ability to rise above challenges and obstacles, inspiring all of us to embrace every opportunity for growth. Beyond her role as a mother, Rachel will continue to be a cherished friend to those lucky enough to know her, offering unwavering support and unwavering kindness. In her, we find not just a source of strength but a lifelong companion on this extraordinary journey called life.

In her role as a pharmacist, Rachel has a wealth of opportunities to make a profound impact on the healthcare community. Beyond her daily duties of dispensing medications and providing invaluable guidance to patients, she might explore avenues for healthcare advocacy and education.

Rachel could actively engage in community health programs, sharing her expertise to promote well-being and raise awareness about vital health issues. Additionally, she might consider delving into pharmaceutical research, contributing to the development of innovative treatments and medications.

Her commitment to continuous learning and her compassionate approach to patient care make Rachel exceptionally well-suited to mentor and train aspiring pharmacists, fostering the growth of future healthcare professionals. In these ways, Rachel can harness her skills and passion to leave an enduring mark on the field of pharmacy, further solidifying her role as a dedicated healthcare advocate and provider.

As for Shem and Rachel's children, their individual paths will lead them to pursue their passions and carve their own destinies.

Asa, with his remarkable aptitude for mathematics, science, and sports science, will excel academically and possibly pursue a career in a scientific field or sports-related industry. His disciplined nature and adherence to rules will guide him towards success and fulfilment.



Asa's passion for academics and his exceptional talent in mathematics, science, and sports science will serve as a solid foundation for his future endeavours. With his determination and drive, he will strive for excellence in his chosen field, whether it be research, engineering, or sports performance.



In terms of his education, Asa will have the opportunity to choose from renowned universities both within New Zealand and overseas. It is likely that he will opt for a university that offers a strong program in his area of interest, providing him with the knowledge and skills to further enhance his expertise. With his commitment to learning, he will make the most of his educational journey, engaging in research projects, participating in extracurricular activities, and building valuable connections with peers and mentors.

Asa's personal life will also blossom in due course. Based on statistical trends and the age at which individuals often consider marriage, it is plausible to predict that Asa may find a life partner and marry in his late twenties or early thirties. However, the exact timing will be influenced by his personal circumstances and readiness for such a commitment.







In terms of his family life, Asa will likely find balance between his professional aspirations and personal relationships. As a responsible and caring individual, he will approach marriage and parenthood with thoughtfulness and dedication. It is projected that he will have a loving and



supportive family, and the number of children he and his partner will have may range from one to three. When considering the sex of Asa's children, it is essential to note that statistical data cannot accurately predict the specific gender of future offspring. In New Zealand, the ratio of male to female births is generally close to 1:1, with minor variations. However, the sex of a child is ultimately determined by biological factors and chance. These children will be raised in an environment that values education, personal growth, and the pursuit of excellence.

In addition to his personal and professional life, Asa will have the opportunity to explore various parts of the world and broaden his horizons. As a result of his academic pursuits, he may attend conferences or research collaborations in different countries, granting him the chance to visit places that align with his scientific interests. Furthermore, his adventurous spirit may lead him to travel for leisure, immersing himself in diverse cultures and landscapes. Whether it be hiking through the Swiss Alps, exploring ancient ruins in Greece, or experiencing the vibrant energy of Tokyo, Asa will embrace these opportunities for personal growth and global perspective.

Ultimately, Asa's life will be characterized by intellectual achievement, personal growth, and fulfilling relationships. His dedication to his chosen field, his adherence to principles, and his commitment to personal and professional growth will contribute to a future filled with success and happiness.

Eli, with his affinity for numbers and love for football, may find himself in a career that blends his passion for sports and his interpersonal skills. Whether it be coaching, sports journalism, or sports management, Eli's charismatic personality will pave the way for him to positively influence those around him.



Eli's natural ability to connect with people and his enthusiasm for sports will open doors to various career paths in the sports industry. He may find himself drawn to a profession that allows him to utilize his analytical skills and combine them with his passion for football. This could involve working as a coach, where he can guide and inspire young athletes to reach their full potential. Alternatively, his charismatic personality may lead him towards

sports journalism, where he can share his insights and enthusiasm for the game with a wider audience. Sports management is another possibility, as his knack for numbers and people skills will make him well-suited for coordinating and organizing sporting events.

In terms of his personal life, Eli may enter marriage when he feels ready for a committed partnership, which could be in his late twenties or early thirties. The exact timing will depend on his personal circumstances, career goals, and meeting the right person who shares his values and interests.

When it comes to his education, Eli will have the opportunity to choose a university that offers programs in sports management, sports journalism, or related fields. He will likely prioritize institutions that have a strong reputation in these areas and provide opportunities for hands-on experience and networking. His university experience will not only equip him with the necessary knowledge and skills but also expose him to diverse perspectives and foster personal growth.



Eli's passion for sports and his adventurous spirit may take him to various parts of the world. He may have the opportunity to visit iconic sports destinations such as Barcelona, where he can witness the magic of football at Camp Nou, or Manchester, where he can soak up the atmosphere of Old Trafford. In addition to sports-related travel, Eli's curiosity and desire for

new experiences may lead him to explore different cultures and landscapes. He may be drawn to destinations like Brazil, with its rich football heritage, or Italy, known for its love of the beautiful game. Eli may also progress in the aviation world as a pilot or as a full time airline passenger beside Milli who often likes to hold his hand on long flights.



As for his residence, Eli's career aspirations and personal preferences will influence where he chooses to settle. He may opt for a location that offers abundant opportunities in the sports industry, such as major cities with renowned sports teams or vibrant sporting communities. Whether it's within New Zealand or abroad, Eli will seek a place that aligns with his professional goals, provides a supportive network, and offers a quality of life that allows him to pursue his passions.



In terms of starting a family, Eli may decide to have children depending on his personal circumstances and aspirations. According to the latest statistics, the average number of children in Eli's family will be approximately 1.8. However, it's important to remember that this is an average, and individual choices may vary significantly. Eli's personal circumstances, such as his financial stability, career progression, and relationship dynamics, will influence his decision regarding the number of children he and his partner choose to have. Given Eli's nurturing nature and his love for sports, it is likely that he will encourage his children's involvement in sports and foster a positive and active lifestyle. Whether he has sons or daughters, Eli will likely strive to create a supportive environment where his children can explore various sports and develop their athletic abilities. By fostering a love for sports, Eli aims to instil values such as teamwork, discipline, and a healthy lifestyle in his children.

Overall, Eli's future is bright, with a career that combines his love for sports and his interpersonal skills. His charisma and ability to connect with others will serve him well, allowing him to make a positive impact in his chosen field. Alongside his professional achievements, he will have the opportunity to explore the world, embrace new cultures, and find fulfilment in his personal relationships.





Milli, with her infectious personality and aspirations to become a schoolteacher, will thrive in the academic realm. Her natural talent for connecting with others and her passion for education will make her an inspiring and beloved figure in the lives of many young minds.





As Milli embarks on her journey through life, her charming personality and dedication to her chosen profession will attract someone who appreciates her vibrant spirit and shares her love for education. Milli will find a partner who complements her nurturing nature and supports her career aspirations. This partner may be someone she meets during her university years or within her professional network, drawn to her warmth and enthusiasm for teaching.







In terms of her occupation, Milli's dream of becoming a schoolteacher will come to fruition. She will excel in her role, leaving a lasting impact on her students and becoming known for her innovative teaching methods and ability to inspire young minds. Milli's dedication to her students' growth and her genuine care for their well-being will make her a respected and beloved educator within her community.





When it comes to Milli's future living arrangements, she may find herself drawn to a location that offers a nurturing and vibrant environment for both her personal and professional life. Whether it's a picturesque coastal town or a bustling city with a rich cultural scene, Milli will choose a place that allows her to thrive as a teacher and provides a supportive community for her and her future family.

In terms of marriage, Milli will find a life partner who appreciates her kind-hearted nature, shares her passion for education, and supports her career ambitions. Their relationship will be built on mutual respect, shared values, and a strong emotional connection. Together, they will create a loving and nurturing home environment for their family, fostering an atmosphere of growth, learning, and unconditional love.

As Milli's journey unfolds, she will leave a lasting impact on the lives of her students, her community, and her loved ones. Through her infectious personality, dedication to education, and genuine care for others, Milli will continue to inspire and uplift those around her, leaving a legacy of positive change in the field of education and beyond.



Retirement will open a world of opportunities for me to delve deeper into my passions and hobbies. As a sporty and adventurous individual, I envision spending my leisure time engaging in exhilarating outdoor activities that New Zealand has to offer. From traversing the breathtaking hiking trails of Fiordland National Park to cycling along the scenic paths of Queenstown, I will immerse myself in the natural wonders of this beautiful country. Furthermore, I will seize every chance to explore the pristine beaches and picturesque landscapes that grace the coasts of the Coromandel Peninsula and the Bay of Islands.

In addition to pursuing my own interests, retirement will grant me the freedom to contribute to society in meaningful ways. I plan to actively engage in volunteer work, particularly in mentoring young athletes and sharing my knowledge and experiences with the next generation. By lending a helping hand to aspiring athletes, I hope to inspire and motivate them to reach their full potential, fostering a sense of camaraderie and sportsmanship within our community.

As time continues its steady march forward, Rachel and I eagerly anticipate the countless adventures that await us, as we embrace the thrill of travel and the exploration of new horizons. Our shared passion for discovery will lead us to embark on a journey across the globe, immersing ourselves in the diverse tapestry of cultures, landscapes, and experiences that our planet has to offer. Each destination will paint a vivid stroke on the canvas of our lives, leaving indelible memories etched in our hearts.

Tokyo, Japan: We will immerse ourselves in the vibrant streets of this bustling metropolis, where traditional temples coexist harmoniously with futuristic skyscrapers. From strolling through the serene gardens of the Imperial Palace to savouring delectable sushi at Tsukiji Fish Market, we will be captivated by the juxtaposition of tradition and modernity.

Bora Bora, French Polynesia: The allure of pristine, sun-kissed beaches and crystal-clear turquoise waters will beckon us to this tropical paradise. We will relax in luxurious overwater bungalows, snorkel among vibrant coral reefs, and bask in the breathtaking beauty of the South Pacific.



Santorini, Greece: The idyllic tranquillity of Santorini will enchant us with its iconic, white-washed buildings, perched atop dramatic cliffs overlooking the Aegean Sea. We will relish in romantic sunsets, savour local cuisine and wines, and explore the ancient ruins of Akrotiri.

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil: We will immerse ourselves in the vibrant energy of Rio de Janeiro, particularly during the world-renowned Carnival festivities. From dancing to the infectious rhythms of samba to witnessing the grandeur

of Christ the Redeemer atop Corcovado Mountain, we will embrace the rich culture and breathtaking landscapes of this lively city.





Safari in Masai Mara, Kenya: Our thirst for adventure will lead us to the heart of Africa, where we will embark on an exhilarating safari in the Masai Mara. Witnessing the awe-inspiring wildlife in their natural habitat, including majestic lions, graceful giraffes, and majestic elephants, will be an experience that connects us deeply with nature.

Machu Picchu, Peru: We will embark on a journey to the ancient ruins of Machu Picchu, perched high in the Andes Mountains. Trekking along the Inca Trail, we will marvel at the architectural wonders of this UNESCO World Heritage Site and soak in the mystical ambiance of the surrounding peaks and lush valleys.

The Great Barrier Reef, Australia: Exploring the world's largest coral reef system, we will dive into an underwater wonderland teeming with vibrant marine life. Snorkeling or scuba diving in the Great Barrier Reef will grant us a glimpse into the mesmerizing beauty of this natural marvel.

The Serengeti, Tanzania: Our love for wildlife will draw us to the expansive plains of the Serengeti, where we will witness the awe-inspiring wildebeest migration and encounter other remarkable animals, such as elephants, cheetahs, and zebras. Going on thrilling game drives and embracing the breathtaking landscapes will leave an indelible mark on our hearts.

Petra, Jordan: The ancient city of Petra, nestled within the rose-red cliffs, will transport us to a bygone era. Exploring the intricate rock-cut architecture, including the iconic Treasury and Monastery, we will feel a sense of wonder and awe at the incredible achievements of the Nabataean civilization.

The Northern Lights in Iceland: We will venture to the Land of Fire and Ice to witness the mesmerizing phenomenon of the Northern Lights dancing across the night sky. Wrapped in the warmth of Icelandic hospitality, we will explore stunning landscapes, soak in geothermal hot springs, and traverse glaciers, creating cherished memories amidst nature's wonders.

As our family continues to grow, we will be blessed with the joy of becoming grandparents. The exact number of grandchildren is uncertain, as it will depend on the choices and circumstances of our children as they embark on their own paths. However, I envision a loving and close-knit family, with grandchildren who bring laughter, warmth, and a sense of fulfilment to our lives. Watching them grow and sharing precious moments will be a source of immense pride and happiness, strengthening the bond between generations.

With Asa, Eli, and Milli carving their own paths in life, we look forward to the day when they will embark on their own journeys of parenthood, passing on the legacy of love and values that we have instilled in them. As they embrace the beauty of creating their own families, we will stand as pillars of support, offering guidance and unconditional love every step of the way.



In the coming years, we envision the pitter-patter of little feet filling our home with warmth and joy. Perhaps it will be Asa and his partner, who, after finding their own paths in the scientific or sports-related fields, will welcome their first child into the world on a beautiful summer day, creating a new generation of scholars and athletes.

Next in line may be Eli, who, with his charming personality and passion for sports, may find a life partner who shares his enthusiasm for life. Their firstborn might arrive in the crisp autumn air, bringing smiles and laughter to our family gatherings, while also leaving a lasting impact on those they encounter with their natural gift for connecting with others.

Finally, Milli, with her infectious personality and dedication to education, may find fulfilment in a career as a schoolteacher before embracing the joys of motherhood. As the delicate petals of spring unfurl, her first child may enter the world, carrying her enthusiasm for learning and fostering an environment of curiosity and exploration.

These future moments of becoming grandparents will be marked by milestones and treasured memories, as we celebrate birthdays, holidays, and family gatherings together. We will cherish the opportunity to guide and nurture these young souls, sharing stories, wisdom, and traditions that have been passed down through the generations.

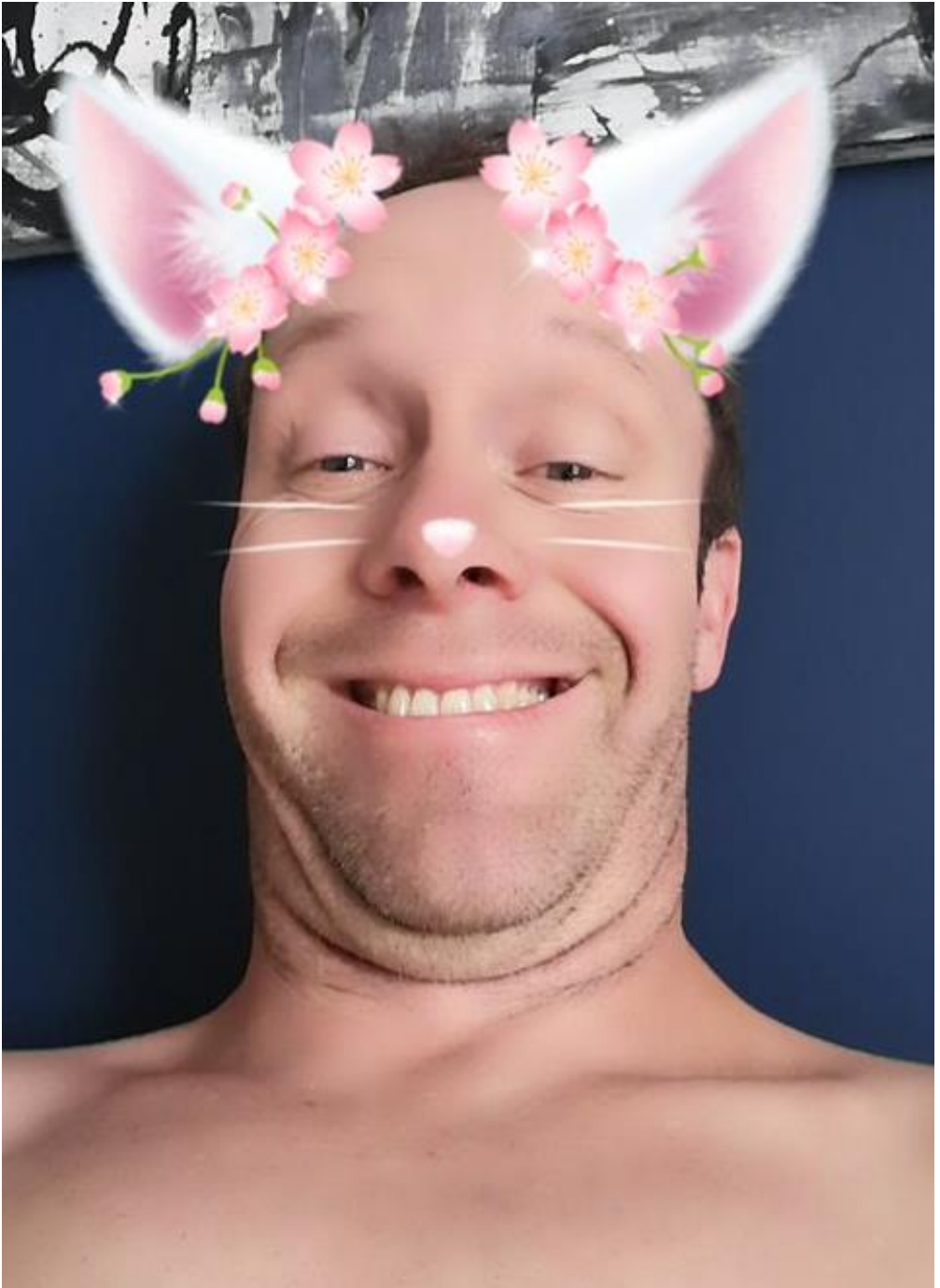
As the years unfold, we will witness our grandchildren's first steps, hear their innocent laughter, and watch as they navigate their own unique paths. They will bring new dimensions of love and happiness, cementing our family's bond and leaving an indelible mark on our hearts.

The role of being grandparents will be a cherished one, filled with the joys of spoiling, teaching, and showering our grandchildren with unconditional love. We will create a haven where they feel safe, loved, and supported as they navigate the world around them.

As your children mature into young adults, they will pursue their own passions and carve their own paths. Asa, with his aptitude for mathematics, science, and sports science, may excel academically and embark on a fulfilling career in a scientific or sports-related field. Eli, with his affinity for numbers and love for football, may find a career that combines his passion for sports with his interpersonal skills, becoming a positive influence in the sports industry. Milli, with her infectious personality and aspirations to become a schoolteacher, will thrive academically, inspiring and nurturing young minds.

Throughout this period, you and Rachel will find opportunities to explore new destinations, both locally and internationally, creating unforgettable memories together. Whether it's enjoying the pristine beaches of Mount Maunganui, embarking on adventurous trips across New Zealand, or even venturing abroad to experience diverse cultures and breathtaking landscapes, travel will continue to enrich your lives and deepen your connection as a couple.

Please note that these predictions are speculative, and your actual timeline and decisions may differ. It's essential to approach the matter with careful consideration, considering the ever-changing circumstances and priorities that arise throughout your life.



## -Amen -

On the closing pages of Shem's autobiography, we find ourselves immersed in the tapestry of a life well-lived. From the innocent beginnings that sprouted from the intimate dance of his parents, Ross and Diane, to the transformative experiences that shaped his character, this remarkable journey comes full circle. It is a testament to the power of resilience, growth, and the unwavering pursuit of dreams.

As the chapters unfolded, Shem's life intertwined with the lives of countless individuals who left indelible marks on his heart. From his childhood friends, like Marcus and Amos, who shared in the laughter and mischief, to the beloved mentors and teachers, including Richard, Marty, and Melissa, who guided him along the path of knowledge and personal growth. Together, they wove a vibrant tapestry of friendships and connections that shaped the very essence of Shem's being.

Through the triumphs and trials, the challenges and accomplishments, Shem's journey illuminated the power of embracing one's passions. From his love affair with sports, whether it be the exhilaration of boxing or the endurance of long-distance running, to the joy of travel and exploration, he pursued his dreams with unwavering determination. These experiences served as the canvas upon which he painted the colours of his life, capturing moments of pure exhilaration, deep introspection, and boundless joy.

But at the heart of Shem's story lies the anchor that grounds him—the love and support of his cherished family. From his early years at Riverlands School and Hampden St School, through the bonds formed with his sister-in-law Ruth and the enduring love shared with his wife Rachel, their presence brought warmth, understanding, and unwavering support to every chapter of his life. Together, they weathered storms, celebrated victories, and created a haven of love and belonging that nurtured his soul.

As Shem reflects on the pages turned and the experiences etched in his memory, he realizes that life is not merely a collection of accomplishments, but a journey of growth, connection, and self-discovery. It is a story that intertwines the ordinary and the extraordinary, the challenges and the triumphs, the laughter and the tears. And through it all, Shem's spirit remained resilient, his heart open to the possibilities that lay ahead.

In closing, Shem's autobiography is an invitation—a call to embrace the dance of life with courage, curiosity, and an unwavering commitment to seize each passing moment. It is a testament to the power of human connection, the resilience of the human spirit, and the beauty that unfolds when we allow ourselves to be fully present in our own stories.

As the final words of his autobiography come to rest on the page, Shem Banbury stands tall, a living testament to the extraordinary journey that led him to this very moment. With gratitude in his heart for the chapters already written and the chapters yet to come, he embraces the future with a renewed sense of purpose, eager to continue authoring a life filled with love, laughter, and the timeless pursuit of dreams.

To my family whose unwavering love and support  
have shaped my journey,

To my friends, whose laughter and  
companionship have filled my days,

To all those who have crossed my path, leaving  
indelible marks on my heart,

Your presence, your stories, and your influence  
have coloured the canvas of my life,

May these pages serve as a tribute to the  
remarkable individuals who have touched my soul.

And may my story inspire others to embrace their  
own unique path,

To find joy in the journey, and to embrace the  
beauty of life's twists and turns.

For it is the collective tapestry of our lives that  
makes each story meaningful.



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- Appendix -

I love you dad because  
when mom is away you take  
us out for take aways. You  
taught me how to play sports.  
you are a special part of me,  
because you taught me everything  
you know. You are first as a  
cheta. You are as strong as a  
gorilla. You are the best  
dad ever! Happy Father's  
day!  
Eli  
Eli

**PART 1** Key: In July a tick will be placed in the March rating if a marked improvement is shown.  
 + Usually  
 - Seldom

Attainment Rating Key: A: Above Average B: Average C: Below Average  
 Industry Rating Key: A: Commendable B: Satisfactory C: Disappointing

HABITS AND ATTITUDES	MARCH		DECEMBER	
	Rating	Ind.	Rating	Ind.
Social Development:				
Shows desirable initiative	+	+		
Is courteous to others	+	+		
Co-operates well in a group	+	+		
Observes school and class rules	+	+		
Shows good sportsmanship	+	+		
Is reliable and helpful	+	+		
Enjoys company of others	+	+		
Demonstrates self control	+	+		
Has friends	+	+		
Work Habits:				
Begins work promptly	+	+		
Follows directions accurately	+	+		
Works independently	+	+		
Does neat and orderly work	+	+		
Completes homework assignments	+	+		

	July		December	
	Rating	Ind.	Rating	Ind.
<b>Listening:</b>				
Listens thoughtfully and attentively	A	A	A	A
<b>Speaking:</b>				
Willingness to contribute	A	A	A	A
Speaks clearly	A	A	A	A
Expresses ideas well in speech	A	A	A	A
<b>Written Language:</b>				
Can effectively express ideas in writing	A	A	A	A
Uses correct English in written work	A	A	A	A
Presentation (Neatness)	A	A	A	A
<b>Reading:</b>				
Word attack skills	A	A	A	A
Comprehension	A	A	A	A
Oral fluency	A	A	A	A
Interest in books	A	A	A	A
<b>Spelling:</b>				
Ability to spell	B	A	B	A
Accuracy in written work	A	A	A	A
<b>Handwriting:</b>				
Day to day presentation	A	A	A	A
Speed	A	A	A	A
Legibility	A	A	A	A

	July		December	
	Rating	Ind.	Rating	Ind.
<b>Mathematics:</b>				
Accuracy in mechanical work	B	A	B	A
Knowledge of basic number facts	A	A	A	A
Understanding of basic number principles	A	A	A	A
Ability to solve problems	B	A	B	A
<b>Science:</b>				
Knowledge and understanding	B	A	B	A
<b>Social Studies:</b>				
Is gaining knowledge and understanding of peoples and their environments	B	A	B	A
Ability to find and use information	B	A	B	A
<b>Music:</b>				
Takes part in musical activities	B	A	B	A
<b>Art and Craft:</b>				
Originality shown	B	A	B	A
Care in completing work	B	A	B	A
<b>Physical Education:</b>				
Muscular co-ordination	A	A	A	A
Contributes to team harmony	A	A	A	A

**COMMENTS — MARCH**  
*Shem has settled in well. He is friendly and helpful and demonstrates excellent attitudes to school life.*  
 Class Teacher *Pat Pat* *R. Cook*

Name: <i>Shem</i>	Class: <i>5.4</i>	Year: <i>1989</i>
<b>PERSONAL &amp; SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT:</b> Self-esteem. Work habits. Responsibility. Respect for others. Relationships.	<i>Shem's work habits and general responsibility have shown a big improvement since the start of the year.</i>	<i>A responsible class member.</i>
<b>LANGUAGE:</b> (Listening and Speaking) Discussion Skills. For different purposes. Courtesy. Curiosity.	<i>He speaks readily enjoying oral work. Has ability to ask relevant questions.</i>	
<b>LANGUAGE:</b> (Reading) Interest. Skills. Uses information. Independence.	<i>Is able to gain enjoyment and information from what he reads. Could perhaps widen his interests in choice of books.</i>	<i>Excellent reference skills.</i>
<b>LANGUAGE:</b> (Written) Proof-reading. Interest. Spelling habits. Handwriting skills. Content.	<i>At his best can be an extremely neat writer. Must try harder with proof-reading to eliminate some basic spelling errors.</i>	<i>Pleasant improvements in all areas especially proof-reading.</i>
<b>MATHEMATICS:</b> Basic facts. Accuracy. Problem solving. Estimating. Addition.	<i>Is doing well in all areas of Maths. Basic facts especially have shown much development.</i>	

Subject Areas: With some Criteria:	Mid Term Comments:	December: Significant Changes:
<b>SCIENCE:</b> Environment. Predicting. Asks questions. Classifying. Hypothesising.	<i>Enjoys science activities. Appreciates the view that people have different ideas about the nature of the world.</i>	
<b>SOCIAL STUDIES:</b> Understanding of needs. Customs of different groups. Interest in environment. Concern for others.	<i>Is interested in what is happening around him.</i>	<i>Concern for others is up more now.</i>
<b>PHYSICAL EDUCATION:</b> Understands benefits of exercise. Can relax. Participates co-operatively. Skills.	<i>Shem shows outstanding ability in all areas. He is developing positive attitudes towards the differing abilities that others may have.</i>	<i>A wide knowledge of activities &amp; sports.</i>
<b>ART:</b> Expresses ideas. Comments thoughtfully about others. Skills.	<i>He is able to discuss the work of others and see value in it.</i>	<i>Comments have increased.</i>
<b>MUSIC:</b> Classroom singing. Makes music. Listens to variety. Dances and moves to music.	<i>Is keen on classroom music and is developing an awareness of various music.</i>	<i>Subjects have increased in year.</i>
<b>HEALTH:</b> Food. Safety. Body Care. Community Health.	<i>Appreciates being fit and having opportunity for recreation. Obedient to his knowledge of safety and hygiene.</i>	<i>All the subjects have shown improvement during the year.</i>

PUPIL'S NAME Shem Banbury

ROOM 20 FORM 1 YEAR 1990

**LANGUAGE** The ability to express ideas in written and oral form with increasing clarity, accuracy and fluency. The skill to use appropriate language in a variety of situations, to be able to write neatly and legibly and to be able to spell those words in common usage, learn new words and have a spelling conscience.

Shem is able to write logical procedures and describe objects with clear, descriptive language. He has shown he readily learns new concepts and skills in formal language but he could develop greater responsibility for editing of his work. Shem participated positively in classroom debates.

**READING** The ability to obtain meaning from what is read and to react to it. To become increasingly independent, and to use reading for enjoyment, and the gathering and processing of information.

Shem has developed his skill at comprehending what he reads be it from words or maps and graphs. He has had mixed success at recognizing the Plot and could develop further his understanding of character. He particularly enjoyed Plays and Poetry.

**MATHEMATICS** The knowledge and understanding of mathematical facts, processes and principles and to use mathematics with accuracy and increasing skill. The ability to solve problems and use maths in everyday situations.

Level of attainment has ranged from 68% to 98% with strengths in Fractions, Percentages and Geometry. He readily grasps new concepts and skills and has shown an interest and commitment to maths Extension.

**SOCIAL STUDIES** The ability to learn about people, past and present and to understand aspects of their way of life in comparison with our own. The use of research skills.

He has shown he can diligently research questions of general geographic knowledge and about Famous People. He understands the differences in living in Lady Nelson and living in present day Thailand.

**SCIENCE** The ability to explore, explain, understand, and appreciate aspects of our environment, use apparatus effectively and use research skills.

Shem has produced logical reports and given reasoned arguments. He has shown independence in class activities and enjoys researching self set questions. He produced a particularly noteworthy level of achievement in the Astronomy Unit.



# Shirley Boys' High School Report

## Form 6

July 1995

Shem Luke BANBURY, 6B

Total Absences (to 10 July) Days 1

For Sixth Form Certificate, grades 1 - 9 are awarded in each subject, with the grade of 1 being the highest level of achievement. At each end of the scale considerably fewer grades are awarded than at the middle of the scale. The most commonly awarded grades are 4, 5, 6 and 7. The grades awarded on this report also follow the 1 - 9 scale and are the current estimates of the Sixth Form Certificate grades.

A separate report will be issued for Nutrition and Food, Science, Automotive, Graphics and Design Technology.

Parents will have the opportunity to discuss this report with the teachers on the evening of 20 July.

Subject	Grade	Subject teacher comments
English A C Bunn	4	Shem is a pleasant, hardworking student. <i>ACB</i>
Chemistry R H Leckie	3	Shem is working well, and displays a good understanding of what he writes. <i>RLH</i>
Phys. Education B A Hunter	6	Shem has not been fully committed here, there is room for improvement. <i>BAH</i>
History S P Garland	3	Shem is a conscientious, hard-working student who is giving a good account of himself. <i>SPG</i>
Accounting A N Hollingworth	3	Shem has a good understanding of Accounting, his hardwork is reflected in his grade. <i>ANH</i>
Mathematics F G Logie	4	A good effort Shem. Well done. <i>FGL</i>

Form Teacher/School participation Cricket 1<sup>st</sup> XI Soccer 1<sup>st</sup> XI

Shem has produced some good grades and he could lift his P.E grade with the same amount of dedication - Well Done! *BAH*

Headmaster

Clearly this is shaping up to be an enjoyable and worthwhile year for you, Shem. Attendance record is excellent too. *SM*



# Shirley Boys' High School

Subject Report: Form 7

June 1996

Shem Luke BANBURY

Form Class: 7P

A separate report will be issued for Catering, Graphics, Design Technology, Art, ESOL, and Literacy.

Subject	Mark	Median	Subject teacher comments
Form 7 Accounting A N Hollingworth	est. 53	47	Shem has mixed results to date. He will need to spend more time at home practising and revising to ensure he passes this year <i>and fully</i>
Form 7 History N D Haywood	65	51	Shem has produced some pleasing results to date. Continued effort will pay off. A pleasure to teach.
Form 7 Physical Education G Fyall	58	51	Shem is performing satisfactorily. Greater effort will inevitably improve his mark. <i>gr</i>
Form 7 Statistics M V Pacey	52	50	Pleasing progress and achievement. Shem's mark has benefitted from his very encouraging first project <i>Mitacy,</i>
Form 7 Economics A N Hollingworth	56	50	Shem will need to improve his exam mark to ensure he passes. This result is inflated by his excellent assigned mark. A little more effort and concentration needed at times. <i>and fully</i>

# SHIRLEY BOYS' HIGH SCHOOL



## PERSONAL PROFILE

**NAME:** Shem Luke BANBURY

**FORM:** 7

**SECONDARY SCHOOLING:** 5 years

**SUBJECTS IN FINAL YEAR:** 7 Accounting  
7 History  
7 Physical Education  
7 Statistics  
7 Economics

**SCHOOL PARTICIPATION:** Prefect (1996)  
Brewster Prize for Physical Education (1996)  
Indoor Bowling Club Prize (1996)  
Christchurch Youth Council representative (1996)  
Sports, Social & Junior Council representative (1996)  
1st XI Cricket (1995, 1996)  
Cricket Blue (1996)  
1st XI Soccer (1995, 1996)  
Soccer Blue (1996)



## **SKILLS - Shem BANBURY**

The following statements report on a broad range of cross-subject skills. They have been achieved by the student during his final year at school. They are based on a nationally standardised bank of statements from which teachers choose in order to best describe an individual's achievements

### **WORK SKILLS**

Shem is a capable student who completes all set work. He presents his work carefully and accurately and is well organised, meeting all deadlines. Shem is actively involved in organising class activities and he shows sensitivity to others. He is, in summary, an excellent student. He tries really hard even though he sometimes finds some concepts difficult - he gets through this by quality work habits. Teachers comment that he is a student who 'gives his all'.

### **COURSE SKILLS**

Shem speaks confidently before a large audience and listens carefully and extracts detail from spoken material. He is able to write a clear report or assignment and he understands subtle and sophisticated written material. He uses visual media effectively to convey a message. Shem has good skills in terms of the gathering, processing and analysing of information. He solves problems by applying appropriate techniques and performs calculations with reasonable accuracy. He demonstrates superior physical co-ordination at a high level with good technique in all areas of Physical Education - especially soccer and cricket.

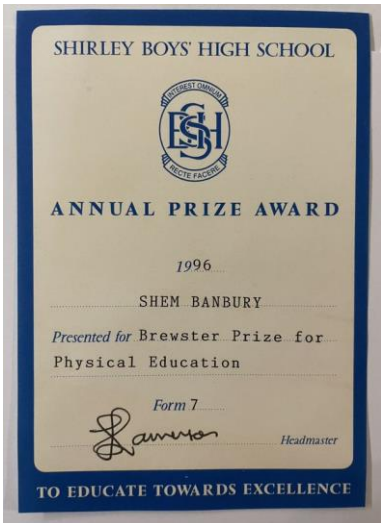
### **PERSONAL SKILLS**

Shem is always cheerful and enthusiastic and he thrives in any leadership role. Whether leading a sports team, or as a Prefect, he shows initiative, inspiration and sheer common sense. He relates well to people of all ages. He is extremely well groomed, well mannered and polite as well as sensitive to the needs and feelings of others. He always gives of his best and is open, honest and completely trustworthy. Shem has made a very positive impact throughout his two years at this school and he leaves with our highest recommendation and our total confidence that he will succeed in his future field or endeavour. He is a very fine young man.

EXTERNAL AWARDS - Shem Luke BANBURY

YEAR	AWARD	DETAILS	
19	School Certificate	History	77
		Economics	64
		Mathematics	54
		Accounting	76
		Science	73
		English	79
1995	Sixth Form Certificate	English	4
		Chemistry	3
		Physical Education	6
		History	2
		Accounting	3
		Mathematics	3

HEADMASTER *Lamson* DATE 2/2/86





NEW ZEALAND QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY  
Mana Tohu Matauranga o Aotearoa

## *New Zealand Bursaries*

This is to certify that in the above examination in 1996

***SHEM LUKE BANBURY***

entered in the following subjects

ACCOUNTING  
ECONOMICS  
HISTORY  
MATHEMATICS WITH STATISTICS  
PHYSICAL EDUCATION

and gained a

***B BURSARY***

Chief Executive Douglas Blackmur  
NZ QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY



NEW ZEALAND QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY  
Mana Tohu Matauranga o Aotearoa

## *University Entrance*

This is to certify that in 1996

***SHEM LUKE BANBURY***

gained a University Entrance Qualification and is eligible  
to enrol at any New Zealand university.

Chief Executive Douglas Blackmur  
NZ QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY



# soccer NEW ZEALAND

P.O. BOX 11357, ELLERSLIE, AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND. PHONE 64-9-525 6120. FAX 64-9-525 6123

**New Zealand Olympic  
Team 2000  
Regional Trials '98**

## Memo

**To:** *SHEM BANBURY*  
**From:** GLENN TURNER  
**CC:** SOUTHERN REGION & AFFILIATED ASSOCIATIONS  
**Date:** 26/09/98  
**Re:** NEW ZEALAND OLYMPIC 2000 TEAM - 'IDENTIFICATION PROGRAMME'

Dear *Shem*

Further to your club nomination for the New Zealand Olympic 2000 Team, New Zealand Soccer is pleased to confirm details for the Southern Region, 'Identification' Trials.

**Date:** Sunday 4 October 1998

**Venue:** Canterbury Football Association, English Park, CHRISTCHURCH

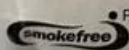
Please assemble at English Park, Christchurch **by 11.30am** on Sunday 4 October 1998. The programme directed by New Zealand Olympic coaches, Ricki Herbert and Ron Armstrong, will include a match versus a Canterbury Invitation XI, kick off at 2.00pm. Bring training gear for a light session prior to the game.

Please confirm your availability to attend the Southern Region 'Identification' trials by telephoning New Zealand Soccer (Sue Batty) Phone: (09) 525-6120 **by 4.00pm Wednesday 30 September 1998.**

Regards

Glenn Turner

MANAGER, OPERATIONS



Page 1



U N I V E R S I T Y   O F   C A N T E R B U R Y

WHEREAS THE UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY HAS BEEN EMPOWERED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY ACT 1961 AND THE EDUCATION ACT 1989, ACTS OF THE LEGISLATURE OF NEW ZEALAND, TO GRANT DEGREES OF THE UNIVERSITY: NOW THEREFORE *THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT*

***Shem Luke Banbury***

HAVING PURSUED THE COURSE OF STUDY PRESCRIBED IN THE UNIVERSITY AND HAVING IN THE YEAR 2001 SATISFIED THE STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS, HAS BEEN DULY ADMITTED TO THE DEGREE OF

**BACHELOR OF EDUCATION**

*Given under our hands this seventeenth day of April 2002  
under the authority of Section 193 of the Education Act 1989.*



Registrar

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Hayward".

Chancellor

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Lynette M. Sutcliffe".

UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY