

TRUST AND OBEY AND LIVE

Monday, 21st March, 1988 began as a beautiful morning, and after a good breakfast at about 8.30 am, Graham, my son-in-law, and I decided we'd try to finish clearing the last remaining section of the rear boundary in readiness for fencing the back of our fifty-three acre property. We only had about eighty or ninety metres to go, and I explained to Graham how to fell the trees within a pre-determined area, by cutting a scarf on one side and then making a cut on the other side a little above the scarf and so on.

The bloodwood tree we chose to cut next was about twenty centimetres in diameter, on the top of a creek bank, and I thought I had explained carefully how and where to drop it. I moved to the bottom of the creek to keep out of his way. After what seemed an unusually long time to put in the first cut, I climbed back up to the top of the creek bank to see what he was doing. He had misunderstood me completely, and had cut almost right through the tree at a slight angle. Just as I approached, the tree moved slightly and he instinctively ripped the saw backwards at full revs to avoid jamming it, and hit me a terrible blow in the lower right chest.

The revving chain instantly severed at least two ribs and severely lacerated the liver and diaphragm. Blood gushed forth profusely. I quickly gathered the mess of bone, flesh and clothing in my arms and pressed it all together to staunch the bleeding. I then set off to cross the creek and stagger the two to three hundred metres to a vehicle track.

Every breath was sheer agony, but I kept going. Graham, almost beside himself with shock and horror at what had happened, finally caught up with me and knelt in front of me so I could climb on to his broad shoulders. The bumping at each step and trying to control my breathing was unbearable, and I had to ask him to put me down. I sent him off home to get the car and to tell my wife and daughter Caroline to bring some towels which I clamped over the gaping wound in my chest to staunch the bleeding.

By then Graham had the car there, and I managed to get myself into the back seat. "Go for it Graham! Caroline and Ruth,(my wife), and the two girls, (my granddaughters), can follow in the other car.

That fifty kilometre ride to town over poor gravel roads and then bumpy bitumen, was horrific. I had to slow him down, as each bump, as well as trying to breathe, was agony. At the Yandaran cross-roads, I had an overwhelming thirst come over me, and asked Graham to stop and get me a drink out of a container we kept in the boot. The car was an older model Volvo Sports, and, as was its habit when hot, the engine snuffed and wouldn't re-start. I had to explain to Graham how to start the motor by shorting out the solenoid points with a screw-driver.

By this time the girls had caught up, and Caroline held her foot on the throttle while Graham tried to find the points I was describing, to short with the screwdriver. Eventually, he found the spot and we were off again at high speed. My wife had climbed in beside me to try to offer comfort and help, as I groaned with the intense pain of each breath, and, as she said later, she wanted to be with me if I didn't make it.

On arrival at Casualty Entrance, I was still very conscious, and able to get out of the car myself. I walked in and a nurse directed me to a wheelchair. A neighbour, Jack Hanks, was there having some sort of treatment, and I acknowledged him and said, "I've got myself cut up with a chain-saw mate!"

Then it was needles, X-rays and the inevitable questions before I was rushed to an emergency operating theatre, where Doctor McGregor and his team did their very best to sort out the mess. The liver gash was cleaned and packed with some special spray foam, the diaphragm muscle was repaired and sutured, the ribs repositioned and then wrapped and sewn over with the muscular tissue lining of the chest cavity, to avoid the sharp ends irritating or puncturing the lung. A liver drain was inserted, and then I was hooked up via tubing through my mouth and nose, to a breathing machine, on which my life depended for the next two and a half days in the Intensive Care Unit.

Of course, I knew nothing of all this, as I was completely sedated and immobilized. My loved ones, who took round the clock vigils throughout the whole ordeal, told me all about it after I woke on Thursday morning and began breathing on my own again.

My wife and I are not members of any religious organization or church group, but we are totally committed to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and we try to live by His moral laws, the Ten Commandments, as well as His eight Natural Laws of Health:

- Sunshine
- Fresh Clean Air
- Pure Water
- Sufficient Exercise
- Adequate Rest
- Temperance
- Proper Diet
- Trust in Divine Power

For many years, we have followed a Vegan Diet, which means we do not use foods of animal origin. The basic diet recipe is very simple. It is:

"Fruits, Nuts, Grains and Vegetables, prepared in as simple a manner as possible, free from grease."

We live in the fresh air and sunshine of the country. We never use town water unless it is properly filtered. We get plenty of exercise as useful work and refreshing rest. None of the social drugs such as Tea, Coffee, Coke, Alcohol, Tobacco or other Drugs are ever used in our home, and we try to be temperate in our use of even the good things. Most of all, we trust in our Omniscient Creator and His promises, that if we will obey His wonderful laws, given solely for our benefit to protect and guide us, He will indeed bless and care for His people. Accordingly, my wife asked me on Thursday morning, if I'd like to be anointed as per instructions for the sick as given in James chapter Five of the Holy Scriptures. At that stage, I could not see through the "valley of the shadow", and I asked her to arrange it for me. She quickly rang some Christian friends, Dean Armytage and his Dad, who live near Boonah south of Brisbane, and they agreed to journey up to Bundaberg as soon as possible to comply with my request.

My father rang the hospital from Bowen on Tuesday, and later on when he visited me on Sunday, he told me how he'd contacted the Sister in ICU by phone. She had told him that I was very seriously hurt, but that my blood had tested out as high on perfect, which, she said, was a very big plus in my favour. I had specifically requested not to be given blood, as I did not want to risk the wogs that are sometimes transmitted in this way today. If blood was needed at all, my son-in-law, Graham, had offered to give of his, as he has the same blood type. Even though I had lost a great deal of blood, I did not need a transfusion, and had full colour again in a few days. What a marvellous machine is the human body!

My daughter Jennelle, arrived from Sydney on Thursday, and joined Caroline and Wendy, (my second daughter), and my wife Ruth, in the long vigils. Even though heavily sedated and totally immobilized for those two and a half days on the Life Support Machines, their voices and touches registered with me. This was clearly indicated by the instant variations in beeps and wave patterns as recorded by the heart monitoring device. They noticed this very interesting phenomenon each time they spoke to me or touched me. It was so encouraging to have my loved ones nearby. It gave me the courage to hang on, and strengthened my determination to live, even though I was not conscious!

On Friday morning, I was supposed to go back into theatre, for further sorting out and exploration under general anaesthetic. When Doctor McGregor removed the dressings and examined the wound early on Friday morning, he just stood there looking intently at it, and never said a word for fully a minute or two. What was he looking at? Why didn't he say something? Was the wound fly-blown? Was he wondering how to tell me I'd need a liver transplant? All sorts of morbid thoughts ran through my mind. After what seemed an age, he looked incredulously at me and said, "This wound wants to heal itself! I won't need to use general anaesthetic. I can tidy it all up, remove the drain-pipe, and put in a few more stitches under local anaesthetic this morning!" What a relief! Again, what a wonderful body machine! What incredible healing mechanisms God has put within this masterpiece of

all His vast creation!

I was still apprehensive about it all, and wondering if it would be possible that Dean and his Dad would arrive in time, to do the anointing service before the return to theatre, scheduled for later that morning. Late morning, mid-day, early afternoon all came and went, and about 3pm Dean and his father arrived. We asked the nurse for permission to draw the curtain, and proceeded with the anointing ceremony as outlined in the Scriptures in James Five. Almost as soon as we had finished, the nurse came and advised that theatre was ready for me. I went off assured that my Maker was with me, and the Master Physician was in charge of my case.

As the final work was to be done under local anaesthetic, I was able to watch the whole thing in the overhead mirrors, and assist as required. Doctor McGregor was temporarily called away to an adjoining theatre, so a younger surgeon offered to do the job, and asked if I'd like him to tidy it up a bit to which I agreed. He straightened the ragged edges of the wound with his scalpel, and then carefully and neatly sutured it all together. Then the large plastic drain-pipe had to come out of the chest, where it had been inserted in its own special hole, to drain the lung area, after the lower lobe of the lung had collapsed earlier on from fluid build-up. The flesh had grown so tightly around it, and it took quite a deal of pulling to remove it, while I held my breath to prevent air entering the chest cavity, before the hole was tightly closed with a 'purse-string' suture technique. Just as young Doctor Cliff completed the job, Doctor McGregor arrived and remarked at what a "pretty job" they had done of it.

From the start, fluids, food, and some medications were administered via a drip into my arm, and all fluids from my bladder were measured carefully via another line and catheter from the urinary tract, and records kept on my charts.

On Saturday morning, I was surprised to find myself experiencing a very definite urge to use my bowels. Eventually, I had to call for a second pan. My bowels worked perfectly, passing the remains of breakfast the previous Monday of the accident. As the doctor explained, at the time of the accident, the stomach went into severe shock and ceased all activity allowing the body to direct all its energies to the healing process, till the crisis was over. Again, what an amazing, remarkable organism!

Saturday morning also brought a light fluid diet, which I was ready for, and even longing for something more substantial. My bowels worked perfectly from then on.

Very early on Sunday morning, the drip entry to my arm began to be very painful. I eventually had to call the sister in charge, who immediately removed it and called the night doctor. He verified that the vein had broken down and was leaking fluid into the surrounding tissues. After checking the charts, he advised that the drip could be discontinued, as all outgoing fluids were perfectly clear and of the correct amounts. I was loosed from the other undignified tie to my bladder on Sunday morning and I was free again at last!

What a thrill to be able to stand upright and walk about again, to wash myself, and visit about the wards to share experiences and encourage the other poor suffering people there. What a miracle to have had such a serious injury, and yet be up and about only days after the accident occurred! I stand amazed myself at the incredible speed of recovery the human body is capable of, when that body is properly managed and cared for according to the "Manufacturer's Manual".

Also on Sunday morning, the local newspaper reporter and photographer who'd heard about the accident and miraculous recovery, arrived, and as a result, the Bundaberg Newsmail carried a large front-page picture and write-up about the whole thing, in the Wednesday, 30th March issue. (See Appendix A)

About a week later, on Thursday, April, 7th, Newsmail printed my letter to the Editor, in which I expressed sincere thanks to all who'd helped me through my traumatic experience. (See Appendix B)

On Sunday evening, after the last of a long line of visitors had left, I went off to the shower, and

enjoyed my first decent bath since admission. The hot water flowing over the wound area felt so soothing, that I found myself reluctant to turn off the hot water tap, to finish with my usual full cold rinse off. I felt so refreshed after the shower, that I asked the sister in charge if I might wander downstairs to the ICU to thank the Staff there for their care. She rang through to make sure they were not busy, and I was able to visit and chat with them for some time, finding out what they had done to me, (See Medical Superintendent's Report Appendix C), and sharing with them my lifestyle, which undoubtedly was largely responsible for my swift recovery. I arrived back in the ward about 10pm, and was able to catch a few winks of sleep. Casualty wards are not conducive to sleep, especially when one is used to the peace and quiet of the Australian bush.

Monday morning brought Doctor McGregor to check me out, and I was greeted with, "Well, how's this fellow with the liver that heals itself?" "He's ready for home!" was the patient's reply. "Now hold on there. Not so fast. I'll need some liver function tests, and perhaps tomorrow...." He ordered a complete liver function test and other blood tests, and changed the diet to light solids.

By now, the light diet was really being relished, and was supplemented with lovely fresh fruit, nuts and lots of dark organic grape juice supplied by my family. The poor dietician was quite non-plussed to know what to feed me, so I sent her the simple recipe, as quoted earlier, and things improved considerably.

Tuesday morning, 29th March, eventually came around and the doctor arrived. Could I go home today? Yes! All liver function tests were perfectly normal. He advised me to be very careful, and not to attempt anything that might undo the knitting process, and to come and see him in a few weeks' time.

So, on Tuesday morning, 29th March, after visiting around the ward and giving each person a little Gospel gift booklet, and thanking the Staff for their care, I walked out of the hospital, not completely fit yet, but well enough to go home, to enjoy sun-baths, herbal teas and poultices, bushwalks, and best of all, uninterrupted rest in my own bed, with my beloved wife and companion to care for me. And this JUST EIGHT DAYS after a terrible injury which could easily have ended my life. I just praise my Maker continually for, as King David said in Psalms 139:14, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Marvellous are Thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well."

A few weeks later, I returned to have Doctor McGregor do a check-up. He sent me for an X-ray, and when viewing it he just stood gazing at it for quite some time without saying a word. Then he turned to me and very deliberately said with great conviction, "Don, if you had not been living as you have for some time, you would most likely not be alive today. And what's more... if I had not seen what happened to you with my own eyes, I would not believe what has happened to you as this X-ray looks like a perfectly normal chest!" I could not help exclaiming, "Praise the Lord!"

My sincere thanks go out to the whole medical and ancillary Staff of the Bundaberg Base Hospital. I found them to be really skilled, caring wonderful people. My sincere thanks also to all who helped and encouraged me, and prayed for me in my hour of need.

Most of all my thanks must go to my Maker and my Redeemer, Who saw fit to answer the many prayers offered, and Who helped me in such a remarkable and miraculous way.

My hope and prayer now is that this experience and my testimony here, may perhaps be the means of encouraging others to follow the laws our Maker has given us to run this wonderful human machinery, for long lasting, smooth and trouble-free operation. Should you happen to accidentally damage this body machine as I did, may you also see the incredible self-healing powers latent within the human body, properly run and maintained in harmony with the unchangeable laws of our Creator.

Thank you for reading my testimony, and now more than fourteen years later, there is a SEQUEL that has to be told!

When one commits his life wholly to God and His service, I believe that accidents which happen always have a reason, and I really believe that true committed Christians do not have 'accidents'....they have 'incidents'. In Romans 8: 28, the Apostle Paul says, "All things work together for good to them that love God." Well, how could my experience possibly work for good?

I have had my testimony written up in the New Idea (See Appendix D) and broadcast over Radio and TV. Literally millions of people have read my story. I have been able through my testimony, to help dozens of people to understand the laws of their being and have seen these folks change their lifestyle and return to good health and strength by following God's laws. This is a continual ongoing opportunity to show everyone with whom I am acquainted, a healthier lifestyle here, and also to help 'whosoever will', to take hold on eternal life.

But the most thrilling outcome, happened about three years ago now, in 1997, while I was in Townsville shopping in Woollies one Friday afternoon. My mobile rang, and a man's voice identified himself as Barry Mason from Charters Towers. I did not remember a Barry Mason. He went on to say,

"Don, I was in hospital with you in Bundaberg, and before you left you gave me a 'little Gospel book' and I've been trying to track you down for some time, because I want you to teach me how to be a Christian!"

Next day was the Creator's special day -- the Sabbath, so I suggested that Barry come to Townsville and we'd have a real Bible Study time together as he was only an hour away. We had over three hours, of wonderful fellowship and study of God's Word.

As I had to return to our home in Kingaroy, I introduced Barry to some wonderful Christian friends, Les and Del Morgan, who live up on Harvey's Range west of Townsville, and they helped Barry to fully understand the major truths of God's Word, and fellowshiped with him often. Then I had a phone call about two years ago now...

"Don, I want you to come up to Townsville and baptize me!"

Of course I was overjoyed to do this for him. We travelled again to Townsville and baptized Barry into Christ and His church, in Les and Del's pool. Barry is still growing and happy in the Lord, and is leading his family in His footsteps also. Praise to our Wonderful God!

If anyone reading this testimony, would like a FREE copy of a 'little Gospel booklet', just let me have your name and address and it will be on its way! For real meaning and purpose in life, just.....

TRUST AND OBEY AND LIVE!

Don Menkens
0428 100 527
donomi3544@gmail.com

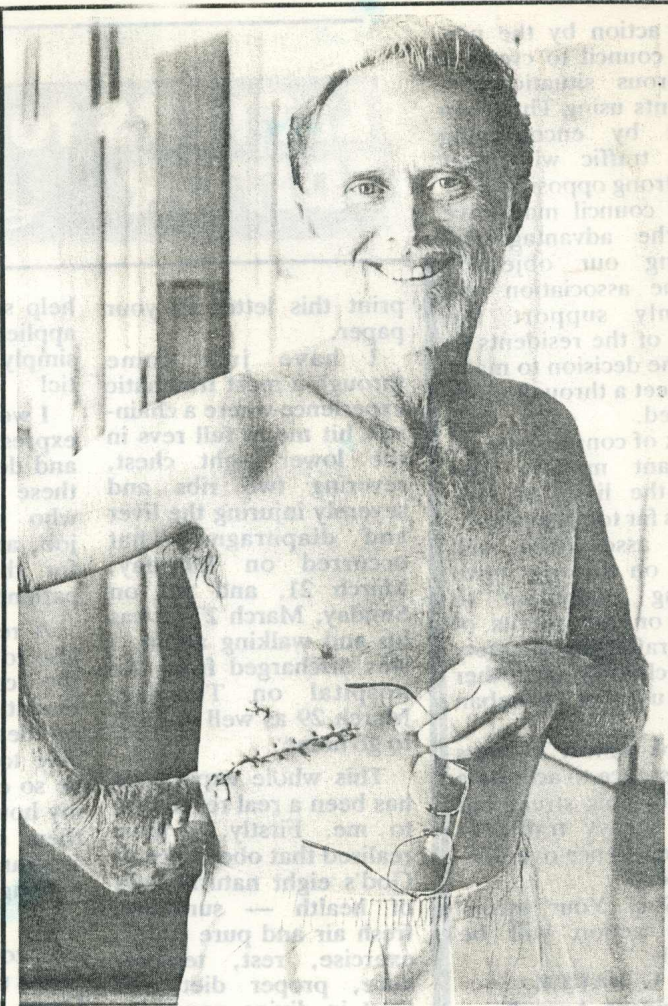
APPENDIX A

ERS ARE SED NISTERS

"NEWSMAIL"
MARCH 30, 1988.

... said he was astounded
an attitude. "It shows a
disregard for farmers in
straits in the worst
history.
of farmers and cattle men
tely out of stock or water
used up the viability of
ey don't know where to
are desperate.
they can be met with such
attitude is unbelievable,"
aid.
airman of the Burnett
ern District Drought
formed at Eidsvold on
Mr David Feez, said,
ouldn't even know what
t was about.
ent to great lengths to
at our meeting was not
They just don't want to
straight out poverty.
we must get editorial

"People can't pay four per cent.
What chance have they got of
paying eight per cent?"
He said Federal politicians were
remote from the problem. "They
won't even come and have a look."
He said the Member for Hink-
ler, Mr Brian Courtice, had been
invited to visit the region but could
not go there until May 16.
Mr Courtice said the meeting at
Eidsvold "certainly was political".
"They were all National Party
members . . . no one gave me an
official invitation and I have no-
thing to be gained by gate-
crashing," Mr Courtice said.
"I am aware of the drought
problems and am taking steps to
make sure Mr Kerin can meet with
farmers at their convenience.
"There have been other meet-
ings and they are probably political
too," he said.
Mr Courtice said he had been
unable to negotiate an earlier time
to visit the district with Mr Slack
because of existing commitments
and the sittings of the State and
Federal Parliaments.



• Mr Don Menkins displays the scar left by a chainsaw. "I thought I'd had it."

z, a grain grower from
nd president of the local
he National Party, said it
sible for people to sell
s. "It's hopeless. They
up the rules but this will
he demise of farmers who
up in this catastrophe.

COMMITTEE, Page 2
EDITORIAL, Page 4

AGAIN



MR RAY PEEK

... photograph of the year was
ed to Mr Lyle Radford of the
island Times, Ipswich, for a
it/personality shot of the Foreign
s Minister, Mr Bill Hayden, deep
versation with the Prime Minister,
b Hawke.

Fossickers' big find

CHATTANOOGA:
When Steve Meyer and
Craig Peden found a big,
blue rock while gem hunt-
ing, Mr Meyer thought it
was probably worth
something — but not
enough to keep him from
using it as a paperweight
on his desk.
Then a master gem
cutter told them that the
baseball-size stone they
found in the Smoky
Mountains of North
Carolina might be a star
sapphire worth millions of
dollars.
Gem cutter John
Robinson said the sap-
phire could surpass the
1154-carat, \$A5.46 mil-
lion Star of America sap-
phire in both size and
value.

Miracle, says man who survives chainsaw accident

**A man who survived a deep
gash from a chainsaw last week
said he believes in miracles.**
Mr Don Menkins, aged 52, said
there was no other explanation for his
"incredible recovery" than his belief in
the Bible and in clean, healthy living.
Mr Menkins was injured when
cutting trees on his property at
Yandaran last week. His son-in-law,
Mr Graham Baird, was slicing through
a tree when the chainsaw dragged
suddenly free.
It struck Mr Menkins across his
right side, severing two ribs, chopping
out a piece of his liver and badly
injuring his diaphragm.

Mr Menkins described the pain as
excruciating. He clasped his arms
around the wound, which bled profuse-
ly, and staggered to the road to get in
the car.
"I thought I'd had it . . . blood
gushed everywhere," Mr Menkins
said. "I grabbed everything tight and
pressed . . . trying to breathe with a
cut-up diaphragm," he said.
"It is a miracle of God and the
tremendous healing power in my
body."
Mr Menkins was released from
Bundaberg Base Hospital yesterday.

TODAY ONLY 10am till 9pm

he early 1970s prevailed on the council to promote and upgrade Thabeban Street. The council finally accepted our requests and let the drain-street widening in 1987. In this time many such as soccer sports grounds, pool, industrial and Shalom College established on the north side of the line, Thabeban is a major thoroughfare serving such. This is an imposition for our submissions. At the end of the association was aware that a town plan had been played and objected to be lodged by in 1988. Perusal disclosed, to the effect, that it is that Thabeban become a main road to carry traffic. The concern of the association for the already using important access was compiled a objection and by January 6. Prior to the election the association that council had with indecently approved the plan. A objection must be brushed aside and not consulted of the response council. We are that such post

haste action by the previous council to create a dangerous situation for residents using Thabeban Street by encouraging heavy traffic will meet with strong opposition.

The council may have had the advantage by ignoring our objection but the association will certainly support the wishes of the residents to have the decision to make this street a through road, modified.

Lack of consultation on important matters that affect the lives of residents is far too prevalent.

The association will prevail on the new town planning committee to confer on the merits of heavy traffic versus safety for the children and other regular users of Thabeban Street.

It took almost 20 years of persistence to acquire a result for this street but not for heavy traffic to have precedence over local dwellers.

No Sirs. Your inconsiderate action will be opposed.

E. G. BAUER,
President, Avenell
Heights Progress
Association, Ashfield
Road.

● Thanks!

When one's heart is just so full and bubbling over with gratitude to God and to one's fellow man, how can I be silent and fall back into an everyday pattern of living.

I want to tell the world and so I would be grateful if you could find space to

LETTERS to the EDITOR



print this letter in your paper.

I have just come through a most traumatic experience where a chainsaw hit me at full revs in the lower right chest, severing two ribs and severely injuring the liver and diaphragm. That occurred on Monday, March 21, and yet on Sunday, March 27, I was up and walking about. I was discharged from the hospital on Tuesday, March 29 as well enough to go home.

This whole experience has been a real revelation to me. Firstly, I have realised that obedience to God's eight natural laws of health — sunshine, fresh air and pure water, exercise, rest, temperance, proper diet and trust in divine power — brings increasing resistance to disease and a much happier, healthier body with tremendous healing power within the human organism to heal itself.

Secondly, I would like the people of this city and the readers of this newspaper to know that we have a facility — the Bundaberg Base Hospital — with skilled professional and ancillary staff second to none. Without the skilled professional

help so quickly and ably applied to myself, I would simply be another statistic!

I would like to publicly express my sincere thanks and deep gratitude to all these wonderful people who really know their job, and who really care for the needs of each patient local or otherwise.

A really big thank you also to the Red Cross for the convenient accommodation provided for my dear ones, who were able to stay in town and be so close by my side in my hour of need. Having them so close gave me assurance and inspiration to hang on.

My sincere gratitude also to two brethren of God's remnant people. — Dean Armytage and his dad — who drove all the way from Boonah to answer my call for anointing as in James 5.

Most of all, however, my deepest thanks must go to God who saw fit to answer these prayers and heal me in such a miraculous way. I am not a member of any denomination, but I love my Saviour dearly and my life and all I possess is totally dedicated to Him in every respect.

D. MENKENS,
Tekoa,
Greenlea Road,
Yandaran.

● Stop signs

Interesting sounds are coming from the hallowed

RY

SHOP ASSISTANT

HAM





All Communications to be
addressed to The Manager.

In reply please quote
this Number:

BUNDABERG *Hospitals Board*
BUNDABERG. Q. 4670.

ps/lm

27th. April, 1988.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

Mr. Donald Menkens was admitted to Bundaberg Base Hospital on 21/3/88 after a chain saw accident when he was hit on the right side of his chest.

This resulted in a large laceration and he was taken to theatre that night where he had a deep laceration to his liver. This was stitched and packed. A large laceration of his right diaphragm was also sutured.

Post operatively he was ventilated and suffered a collapse of the base of his right lung. Extubation was performed on the 23/3/88 and from that time onwards he made good progress. The remaining wound was closed on the 25/3/88 and he was subsequently discharged on the 29/3/88.

This indeed was a serious laceration to the upper abdomen resulting in considerable blood loss with damage to the lung, diaphragm and liver.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'P. Sweeney'.

P. SWEENEY.
MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT.

Don Menkens: a chainsaw couldn't sever his faith

Happy and healthy, this teacher turned farmer attributes his amazing recovery to his religious beliefs

Don Menkens can still vividly recall the second his son-in-law pulled back a high-revving chainsaw, and the shock as the teeth tore into his side just above the waist.

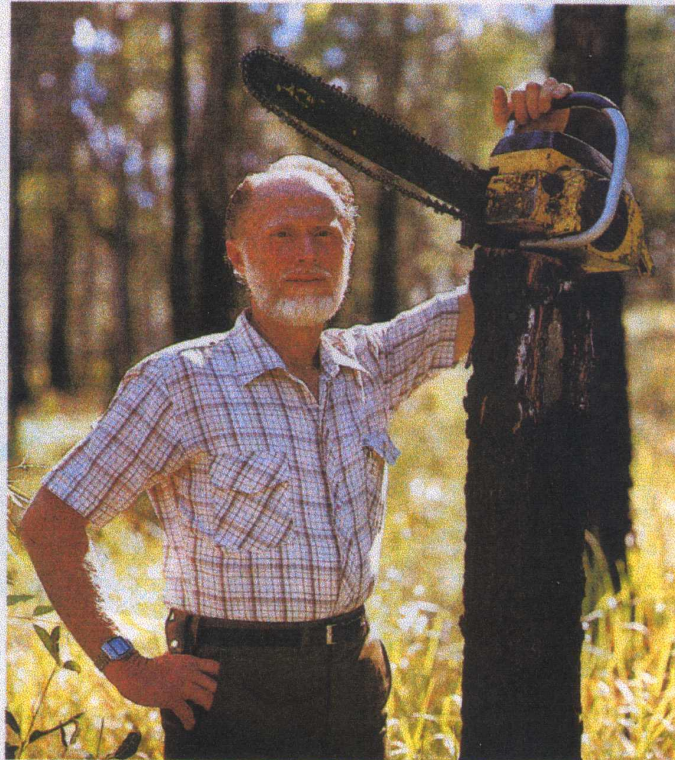
Out in the bush and 50km from the nearest hospital, the accident would have killed most men. But Don, 52, a devoutly religious man, was back at work on his property eight days later.

Don, his wife Ruth, one of their daughters Caroline and her husband Graham, were living on a property north of Bundaberg, Queensland. Don and Graham had been clearing trees for fencing on the property when the accident happened.

After showing Graham, a manual arts teacher, how to fell a tree with a chainsaw (by making a cut on one side and then a wedge on the other to control the angle of fall), Don was working in a creek bed with a crowbar and an axe.

He was waiting for Graham to fell the tree, but when nothing happened he climbed up from the creek and approached Graham from behind.

"As I got near him I could see he hadn't made the other cut, but was trying to go straight through the tree in one go," Don says. "Just as I got to him, the tree lurched and Graham panicked, thinking he was going to jam the saw. He ripped the chainsaw back.



• Don Menkens at the scene of his accident.

"I saw it coming and this was the vision I was to have for some time afterwards. It was revving flat out and as I jumped back to avoid it I put my arm up to protect myself."

Fortunately, as it turned out, the spinning teeth missed Don's arm and tore into the right side of his chest. In an instant two ribs were severed, the diaphragm slashed and his liver lacerated.

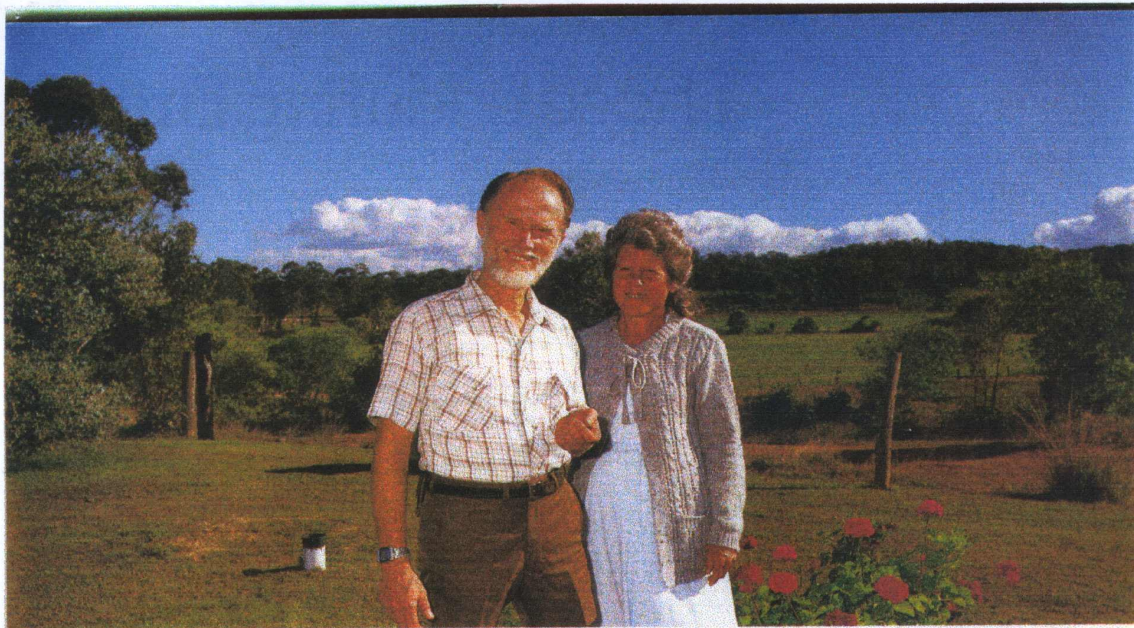
"It just happened so quickly; it was instantaneous," Don recalls.

Graham, according to Don,

stood riveted to the spot, the chainsaw still in his hand, already going into shock. Don immediately went into a crouch and, with his hands covered in dirt and grime from his labors, started shoving back the parts of him that emerged from the gaping wound.

"I was trying to pick up the mess, shove it back in and stop the blood flow. I knew I had to stop it somehow."

By the time Graham had snapped back to reality, Don was already 30m through the bush



• Don and wife Ruth . . . they made a 50km mercy dash to hospital.

heading for his wife and daughter in their cabin 100m away.

"The pain was indescribable, I knew I had to get moving," Don says. "I was trying to breathe but the saw had cut through the diaphragm. Every breath was agony because all the muscles around it had been mangled.

"I was still dragging myself along when Graham started screaming, 'Dad, Dad, wait, I'll carry you'.

"I knew if I tried to get on his back it would be impossible to hold everything in. But eventually he raced up in front of me — and he's a big lad — knelt down and told me to get on. So I got on his back and there was blood and gore all over him — it was even in his hair.

"But as he strode along through the bush the pain was just unbearable. I had to get him to put me down and go the rest of the way on his own. I just couldn't bear it."

While Don squatted by a bush track, Graham sprinted to the cabin and Caroline and Ruth rushed back with a towel to staunch the blood. Graham came down in Don's car and put him in the back seat. Ruth and Caroline took another car.

"Graham took off fast but I had to get him to slow down. Every bump was agony," Don says.

They had 50 tortuous kilometres ahead of them over dirt roads and

bumpy bitumen to get to Bundaberg Base Hospital, but 20km into the journey Don had to get Graham to stop to get him a drink of water from a container in the boot.

While Don was slaking his parched throat the car's engine sputtered and died, as it had done before.

"I had to instruct Graham to short the points with a screwdriver," Don recalls. "By that time Caroline and Ruth had turned up and Caroline held the accelerator down while Graham eventually found the right points."

Although every second counted, with Don losing blood at an alarming rate, the family didn't panic.

"I was surprised Don stayed conscious all the way to the hospital. He didn't want me to touch him. He knew what he was doing," Ruth says.

When they finally arrived at the hospital, Don walked unaided into the casualty section.

"I must have been really and truly conscious," Don says. "I saw my neighbor in casualty when I walked in. I waved to him and explained that I'd just had a bit of an accident with a chainsaw.

"He got really mad with the doctors because they were fussing over him. I remember him saying, 'Leave me alone. That man is my neighbor and he's dying.'"

Doctors were amazed at the speed of Don's recovery.

A former teacher and now a farmer spreading the word of the Seventh Day Adventist Church near Boonah in south-eastern Queensland, Don lives according to the teachings of his church.

"It's a simple philosophy," he says, explaining his good health. "There are ~~five~~ laws of health: sunshine; fresh air; pure water; proper rest; exercise; temperance, which includes leaving alone alcohol, tobacco, tea and coffee; a pure diet of fruits, grains, nuts and vegetables; moderation in all things; and faith in the divine power."

Don's faith, now unshakeable, has spread to his ~~four~~ children and 10 grandchildren, who, he says, were never as convinced as he was.

"It has cemented in my own mind that this is the way to live and it has turned my family's thinking around too. They are starting to believe there is truth in what I have been telling them.

"If, in the long run, it enables them to be healthy and happy, then that's all a father can want for his children.

"I continue to be amazed at the incredible powers of the body. It is true, we are fearfully and wonderfully made."

Story: Graham Bicknell
Pictures: Doug Drummond