

Family Letter.

Dear Uwe and Nangu Thina,

Back home again from America, safely and have got Lorna's 92- year old Mum back with me. Janet and the girls are with us during the week, as from the beginning of the year the 3 girls attend Penryn College 20 minutes from here. They go home to Bert on a Friday afternoon for the weekend. Got so much to catch up on and correspondence to reply to, so here goes.

Thanks so much for your thoughts and prayers, phone calls and cards, which carried us through. We couldn't all be together but we organized synchronized memorial services on Tuesday the 4th of April, at 9h00 in the morning in St. Francisville, Louisiana, USA and at 16h00 in White River, South Africa, where Janet and Bert, Alistair and Valeta did the arranging at this end. The services had the same Bible readings, hymns and Lorna's story. The ministers, Ron Howard from the Methodist Church here and Brother Joe Ratcliff from the 1st Baptist Church, St. Francisville, were in contact with each other by phone and by e-mail. Both services were so well attended: St. Francisville, we had over 60 folks from Church and Community, family & friends we had met and made on each of our 5 visits. At White River, the Church over-flowed, and many folk sat outside by the loud speakers. We have experienced God's perfect timing, His planning and Presence all the way. Just one of the many instances was that the St. Francisville Church pianist, Paula, who played for the memorial service told us she had, 2 months before, been looking and playing through her Baptist hymn book when the hymn 'Now Thank We All Our God' (which we sang in the service as it was our wedding hymn – not a well-known Baptist hymn!) caught her fancy. She put her own arrangement to it and practiced it diligently over and over for playing 'sometime in the future'! The managing director of the funeral undertakers, Mr George Charlet, is a very active old scouter (one of two who are leading the Southern Region Contingent to the World Scout Jamboree next year) whom we met briefly in 1996 during our first visit to Jenny and Bob out there, really looked after us. In America, to obtain a death certificate usually takes between 2 to 3 weeks, George had 'pulled all the strings' and handed us the certificate at the end of the memorial service (3 days!) Amazing, isn't it? God provides. The Church congregation went out of their way to care for us, sending us meals, praying for us and to both Lorna and I it was always like coming home to join in the services. Of course the two families have been very involved in the church (and community) for a good while now and are very well thought of and popular amongst everyone. The Church organized a Blood Drive on the one Sunday where a huge mobile blood transfusion unit parked at the church and before, between and after the two services folks donated and the Unit received double the number of pints of blood than they originally expected. This was all for 'Ms Lorna Baty's blood replacement' and there were posters put up all over town advertising the Drive. They even came forward to pay for Jennifer's return flight to fly home with us so we would have extra help on the way, but as it happened, it wasn't necessary. They really are exceptional people. We had a wonderful 7 weeks together with our families and were able to do so much with them. We all went to a State Park for a long weekend and we also managed a four- day trip to Vancouver, Canada where we were in 4 feet of snow! Lorna thoroughly enjoyed it and coped very well with it all. It was only the last few days that she really battled with her health but still remained positive through it all and passed away peacefully Friday morning, 31st of March 6h45 with myself and Jenny with her in Jenny's home. The bus had already taken the children off to school and Bob had left at 5h30 for a Scout Woodbadge training course, which Lorna had helped him prepare for. It really was such a blessing she wasn't in hospital tied up to machines. She was where she wanted to be in one of her favourite parts of the world with her families. She always referred to it as a 'little bit of heaven on earth'. We were blessed with 42 wonderful married years together. "Her Spirit Lives On"!

Thanks again for all your thoughts and prayers.

Lots of love, God Bless
Charlie and the Clan.

One of Lorna's most exciting and memorable times was our visit to Germany (her first) and attending the Nangu Thina Meetings. She told so many folk about the wonderful group of Young People in Nangu Thina who were so enthusiastic for helping the Progress of Scouting & Guiding Mpumalanga. THANK YOU ALL!