

Micheal (Mick) Edwards

Born in Canberra, 1929

CGS: 1935 to 1937

196 on the School roll

Excerpts from *Catching the Vision*. Edited by Adrian Keenan.

Recollections of my first day at school:

I can remember quite vividly the day the Boss (my father) decided that it was time for me to gain some education and introduced me to the mysteries of the three Rs. At this time Cherry Moriarty was in charge of prep form. I had known Cherry for some time and had quite a soft spot for her—mainly because there were quite noticeable signs that she would be able to grow a moustache on her upper lip and she always smelled of cigarettes—and this combination really impressed me. But it was a very different Cherry Moriarty who met me at the door of prep form that day. Yes, she still showed signs of a mo and the cigarette smell was there too! Right from the start we didn't see eye to eye and when she told me to sit at a desk, I refused.

'Oh, yes you will,' said Cherry.

'No I won't,' said I, and kicked her in the shins to let her know I meant it.

'Oh, yes you will,' she said and kicked me in the shins—to show she meant what she said.

That was my introduction to education.

On that 19th day of July 1929, at the Old Rectory in Ainslie, in the heaviest ever snow fall recorded in Canberra, Amy Edwards brought into the world what was a first for Canberra—the heaviest bay to be born in the Federal Capital Territory—on Mick Edwards, weighing in at 14lbs. (Mick held this record for some 20 years). As he had done for Jill at Manaro Grammar, the Headmaster and proud father gave the School a half-day holiday to celebrate the birth of his son.

Unfortunately Mick missed many years of school and sport due to rheumatic fever. He was confined to his room in the Headmaster's house for two years, which for a sports-loving boy was very trying. His mother set up a large mirror so that he could watch the sport on the Main Oval. In 1937 Mick, a keen cricketer, was visited in his sick bed by the English Test team captain, 'Gubby' Allen.

After leaving school he worked in the Millawa District of Victoria as a jackeroo on a mixed farm. From there he travelled north to the Darling Downs in Queensland working on a sheep and wheat property on the Condamine River. His next moves were to the Goondiwindi district and to Eudlo in Queensland. While working there an old cricketing mate from the Darling Downs drew a Soldier Settler's block and asked Mick to give him a hand. This turned out to be quite an experience, milking 130 cows on three thousand acres of brigalow scrub.

From Queensland, Mick gradually worked his way south, ending up working for Faulkner & Johns at Boomoke North where he met and married Daphne Sheldon. When his mother died in 1962 he was managing a property at Oberon for two Sydney doctors who offered to build a flat onto the house for his father, but WJE couldn't be persuaded to leave the house in Canberra—even with the guarantee of good trout fishing thrown in—so Mick and his family moved to Canberra to take care of him there.

Mick bought a small property outside Cootamundra. When his two children decided it was time to leave home, Mick sold the property, bought a caravan and headed for the warmth of northern NSW. Mick and Daphne have lived in Sandy Beach, just north of Coffs Harbour, for the last 18 years.