

Remembering Max Tregonning

*There is a time for everything,
and a season for every activity under the heavens,
a time to be born and a time to die,
a time to plant and a time to pluck what has been
planted...*

*Ecclesiastes 3:1-2
(read at Max's Memorial Service)*

Maxwell Ross Tregonning's time to be born was September 25, 1948, and his time to die was October 7, 2023. October 18 was the time to remember and celebrate the various seasons of his life and the different facets which made Max who he was, some seen and known and others yet to be revealed.



We learned about the young Max who was born in Dunedin, grew up in the suburb of Portobello before moving with his family to Auckland. He returned to the "Mainland" to study Agriculture at Lincoln College where he was also a keen rugby player. During that season he met Adrienne, at a church youth group activity. Their friendship blossomed and they were married nearly four years later on the day after Adrienne's 18th birthday; a marriage which lasted 51 years. Thus followed the seasons of Max the Farmer, then Max the Father of Andrew and then Rebekah. Interspersed was Max the Extramural Student studying business studies in stages before graduating with a BBS from Massey University, and a variety of jobs and careers. By the time I met Max, he was in his Max the Grandfather, of two, then three granddaughters, season and who I got to know next as Max the Gardener, and Max the "Churchman".

Max enjoyed his "time to plant" and spent long hours each day in the St Peter's community garden, named "Lady Chatterley" by Adrienne. At home, Max put any spare garden beds and his greenhouse to good use, growing vegetables and tomatoes, the latter long after *their* expected seasons. It was here that Max's No. 8 fencing wire mentality was shown, as he was able to repurpose any household item for this purpose, from growing seedlings in decommissioned electric fry pans to converting a waterbed frame into a vegetable planter, using a disused security screen door to protect said seedlings from birds. He taught me that it was possible to grow pretty much anything in pots, and through testing his hypothesis, I now have a productive container garden myself.

Max wore several hats at St Peter's, and it was not unusual to see him tending to "Lady Chatterley" or mowing the church lawns on a Saturday morning, then scrubbing up and donning a suit in his role as Verger, and then see him the next

morning in his alb to carry out his duties as worship leader or crucifer. His role as sous-chef at home prepared him well for his role as head sausage sizzle chef at our church fairs whilst Adrienne manned the Raffle stall. Max was truly one of the stalwarts, taking part in working bees around the church gardens, helping out with repairs inside the church, and wrestling mightily with the canvas church fair banner against that notorious prevailing wind funnelling up Broadway.



This brings me to Max the neighbour who always could be relied on keep an eye on my property when I was away. along with Max the host, as he and Adrienne enjoyed entertaining at home, with Max's roles including carving the meat or driving his barbeque while enjoying a beer or pinot gris.

Then there was Max the colleague, fellow examination invigilator at Massey, and Max the Across Board Member where the temptation to work on the jigsaw puzzle spread out the on the boardroom table sometimes did get the better of him. He retained his love for reading, crosswords, computer solitaire and his sudoku puzzles; and finally, his sport which he watched until the end. His room featured pictures of his beloved trains, and I wish he had got around to finally unpacking and playing with his train set.

A portion of Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey" was also read at Max's memorial service. As it was read, we were invited to reflect on how it might have described Max. He definitely mirrored the poet's love of nature, and his tendency to dream, and I know he will be remembered by

*His little, nameless, unremembered, acts
Of kindness and of love...*

From "Tintern Abbey" by William Wordsworth

Adieu Max, friend and neighbour. +Rest in peace and rise in Glory.

Ingrid Vlieg

