

## ***Early Years***

Randall McMullan was born in Wellington, New Zealand. A Capital City of no great heat, but a city of light, and a city of sounding winds. The *Evening Post* newspaper of Wellington printed a notice of his birth, on the very same day of his birth, 6 September 1944, confirming his mother's memory of the birth being early in the day at 1230 am. The place was the private Harris Hospital, Ghuznee Street; a large converted 2-storied house now lost to the motorway tunnel.

In December 1936 the Evening Post carried the following notice:

McMULLAN—RANDALL. The engagement is announced of Agnes Adelaide, second daughter of Mr. and Mrs. L. V. Randall, Wellington, to Laurence Gerard, younger son of Mr. and Mrs. T. McMullan, Dunedin.

Randall's parents were married in 1939 after a long courtship and then still took their time to produce Randall in 1944, followed by his sister Lyndsay in 1947.

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My early memories of the physical world are linked to the flat that we lived in at 11 Rankin Street, Wadestown and to the house-shop of my grandparents at 342 Tinakori Road, Thorndon. [I recall where my parents slept and how I once climbed out of my cot to join them.]

The Tinakori Road residence had the added physical interest of an attached dairy shop full of things and people, a range glowing in the kitchen, a large RCA radio in the lounge, and stairs upwards to the 3 bedrooms and bathroom. The raised patch of garden and lawn at the back of the house is the scene for many photos of various family members with me.

My father was a conscript in the army at the time of my birth and was he overseas, out of my life, from when I was 5 months old until I was 18 months. There is a quayside photo of Larry in uniform, just stepped off the troopship, holding me; I am looking not altogether sure about this stranger. Meanwhile my mother obviously spent much of her time at Tinakori Road and I do remember standing on the seat of a tram looking out the window as we laboured up through 'the cutting' to our Wadestown home.

**Heat** triggers a memory of hot sand at the beach burning the soles of toddler feet and some sort of frustration at adults not appreciating the pain and annoyance. I assume that the photo of me sitting on a dinghy is at the same event, or a similar one.



With Mother. Aged around 14 months



At a Kapiti Coast beach – aged 2 or 3



With father who is just off troopship  
- At a Wellington wharf with father  
just off troop ship. Aged around 18  
months



Looking less wary of father. In garden at back of Tinakori Road Dairy.  
Aged around 3 years.

## ***Wellington Tinakori Road Memories***

### *Botanic gardens*

I remember having an unbotanic interest in matters watery, such as the swans on the pond and in the shiny brown salt-glazed half round clay pipes laid as gutters, which still exist. Later this interest would re-emerge when I used the same pipes to make runnels and water features in a garden at Wembley Park London.

### *Circus*

A Big Top – probably of Wirths' Circus - was set up in Anderson park. I remember going into the Big Top with my granddad and, among other things, watching trapeze artists. Many years later I would know, and love, a trapeze artist.

### *Dick Seddon*

I don't recall it, but apparently I was interested to know just who was the man standing on top of the tall plinth in the Bolton Street Cemetery memorial park at the edge of Anderson Park. It was and is 'King Dick' Seddon, the popular Premier of New Zealand who died in 1906.