



HERRMANN, Nola Eileen (nee McBean)

Nola HERRMANN | 22 Dec 1967

NOLA EILEEN³ MCBEAN (DUNCAN MATHIE², LACHLAN MOORE¹) was born on 22 December 1967. She married DEAN ALBERT HERRMANN on 11 September 1993 in Harare, Zimbabwe, son of EITEL HERRMANN and GINETTE WARWICK. He was born on 11 January 1963 in Salisbury, Rhodesia. Nola is the daughter of MARGARET ANN⁸ FLEMMER (OWEN JOHN⁷, MARIUS TOGER⁶, HANS CHRISTIAN⁵) and was born on 3 April 1940 in East London, South Africa. She married DUNCAN MATHIE MCBEAN on 10 December 1966 in Blantyre, Malawi, son of LACHLAN MCBEAN and GERTRUDE O'MEARA. He was born on 23 June 1934 in Salisbury, Rhodesia.

PERSONAL HISTORY of Nola Eileen Herrmann (nee McBean)
Mbabane, SWAZILAND 2 April 2001

My parents, Duncan and Margie McBean, were living in Blantyre, Malawi as ex-patriots as the time for my birth grew near. (My father was working for the Shell Company there.) My maternal grandparents, Owen and Heyla Flemmer were resident in Bulawayo, Rhodesia and because I was the first child, it was there that my mother travelled in time for my arrival. I was born at the Mater Dei Hospital where my first attempts at suckling were witnessed by 'Father' Christmas, who turned out to be a nun in drag, much to my modest mother's relief!

I was taken to Malawi aged only a few days and spent the first months of my life in Blantyre. By the time my sister Carol Ann was born on 8 July 1969, we were back in Rhodesia, Salisbury this time, and about to move into a scheme house that my parents had built amongst the msasa trees in the then new suburb of Mandara. It was there that we spent many hours sweeping out our thatched Wendy-house, learning to ride our bikes, and climbing over the stile at the bottom of the garden to visit friends who lived down the path. There was an African compound in the 'bush' that bordered our property and it was with a mixture of fear and curiosity that we would venture as close as we dared to get a glimpse of their children and an inkling of how they lived. Our 'house-boy', Dafta was part of the family to us, and I shed many tears the day he was caught and fired for theft of meat from the freezer. Every winter, the dry grass of the 'vlei' would burn and we would join the neighbours along the boundary in a common desire to stave off the blaze. Small mammals, sometimes even a buck, would run before the flames in terror - a wild area that was gradually stripped of much of its indigenous forest and finally developed less than 10 years ago.

But to go back to the seventies - Carol and I were at junior school (Courteney Selous, in Greendale) which, as soon as we were able, was close enough for us to ride to on our bicycles. Most children did the same, and the bicycle shed was a large affair and a common meeting place at the end of the day. Even the traffic department took us seriously and there were regular inspections to check that we were licensed and that our 'vehicles' met their stringent safety requirements. Depending on the craze of the day, we played marbles in the dust, French skipping (fancy manoeuvres with a long bit of elastic) on the purple 'carpets' under the jacaranda trees or hopscotch on the quad.

Secondary schooling took place for us at Oriel Girls' High School - Carol and I left there on the same emotion-filled day, and I went on to a private school, Arundel (fondly known as 'The Pink Prison') while she started a very worthwhile secretarial course that soon had her in excellent jobs while I struggled along as a pharmacy student at Rhodes University, Grahamstown. To say that they were happy years though is a gross understatement. I loved res life and got very involved in several societies as well as the social scene. My final year was spent in 'digs' with 8 other students from nearly every faculty on campus. It was not without it's tricky moments, but was generally a very positive experience. We clubbed together to employ a maid, who cooked, cleaned and ironed for us (poor woman!). The house was old (the sort with a long passage right down the middle and a fireplace in every bedroom) and had mushrooms and snails in the shower, an old door for a kitchen table, and a resident rat family...but we loved it and the time we had there.

I had set my heart on doing my internship in Cape Town, and was rewarded with a post in Constantia Pharmacy. I initially boarded with an elderly family friend in Plumstead, and rode her 'sit-up-and-beg' bicycle to work, often in less than ideal weather conditions. My boss arrived in black leathers on his 1000cc BMW, so wasn't the sort to mind my looking like a drowned rat in a transparent uniform for half the day! By the time Carol joined me after a spell in UK and Europe, I did have a car (technically Dad's) and had found another pharmacist who was willing to share her Claremont flat with both of us. Cape Town was a wonderful place to be and our weekends were spent strawberry/ cherry picking, hiking, picnicking, wine-routing, swimming and socialising. The long evenings meant we could meet friends for sundowners after work at places like Llandudno and Clifton.

In early 1991(as the Gulf War raged in the Middle East) we returned together to Harare but Carol wasn't there long before going back to the UK where her relationship with Billy Teeton became a whole lot more serious (they were married just over two years later in Harare). Meanwhile I was swept off my feet by Dean Herrmann which precipitated the end of a long-standing university relationship.

My goal for that year was to earn enough to buy a 'triangle ticket', which would take me to London, the Far East and Australia and was valid for a year. Dean had already done a 'walk-about' in 1988 (this was now 1991) but my plans caused the travel bug to bite again and I'd only been in France a couple of months when he joined me there. The English family, who had employed me as their chalet-girl in Grand Bornand, agreed to take Dean on too, so we worked together and skied in our spare time. When the snow started to melt as April approached, we were out of a job and headed back to London. Finding work in the engineering and pharmacy fields proved very difficult, but just when we were getting despondent, Dean picked up a yachting magazine containing the ad of our dreams. We were taken on as crew (water-sports instructor and galley slave!) for a 60' concrete-hulled schooner in Greece. A middle-aged English seadog was sent out with us as captain, and we had cause to be grateful for his vast experience. The boat needed weeks of work before she could sail, but we loved the life she showed us, and that summer was rich with new experiences. We travelled from Kalymnos in the east to Levkas in the west, picking up and delivering passengers as we went. The end of another season saw our return to London to connect with our homeward flights. Seven weeks was far too little to divide between Hong Kong, Bangkok, Ko Samui, Singapore, Cairns, Sydney, Melbourne and Perth, but we did as much as we could in the time we had.

Settling down to running a suburban Pharmacy after that was a challenge, but Carol and Billy's wedding in April 1993 and our own in September of that year were sufficient distractions! We were married on a beautiful farm at Norton, Saffron Walden (now occupied by 'war veterans') and set up home in a small flat in Avondale West. We were about to move into a house we'd bought in Glen Lorne, Harare, when Dean was offered a 9-month post in Mauritius, so we went there instead! We did a lot of diving and enjoyed all the visitors we had, but found it too crowded a place to be for long.

In retrospect it was a good thing that there was no work for Dean on our return to Zimbabwe, and that he seemed to have been stripped of all his status by being out of the Harare office for a while. It was because of this that we were forced to look further a-field, and ended up in Burrow Binnie's Swaziland branch. We have happily been here for 6 years and have since had two children who were both born in Harare: Marc Alan on Mothers' Day of 1996 and Danielle Ashleigh on Mothers' Day of 1998! After much deliberating and heartache, and taking the political and economic climate of Zimbabwe into account, we have made the decision to immigrate to New Zealand. The Flemmer family Tribal Gathering in Cape Town over the Easter weekend in a few weeks time will therefore be a bittersweet experience for us; leaving Africa and all our loved ones is probably the hardest thing we've had to do so far.

Recent pics taken 2022



Nola and Dean



Dean, Marc, Dani and Nola



Dani and Marc

Nola Herrmann (nee McBean)

June 2001- June 2022

It's been 21 years since the family reunion in Cape Town. Hard to believe, both because it feels like 'just the other day' and also because so much has happened in that time...

It has been a very formative two decades for our little family unit. Marc and Danielle were both pre-schoolers then, as we embarked together on the adventure of moving to Hamilton, New Zealand. They are now both qualified Veterinary surgeons of whom we are exceptionally proud. The menagerie of pets, large and small, that lived out their lifetimes in our midst as part of our family can take much of the credit for teaching more than any lecture ever could. Marc and Dani's personal profiles will tell their own stories from their perspectives.



From the moment we landed in Auckland we were scooped up by Dean's new boss and his wife and allowed to find our feet. Within a few days of arriving an estate agent took us to the house that has been our home ever since. The large garden with its mature deciduous trees, the surrounding paddocks and the renovations needed on the house have kept us busy and taught us all many new skills. Only a few weeks ago we thinned out the clutter accumulated over the years; evidence of past hobbies and interests, school and university lives and my career change (pharmacy to preschool teaching) emerged from the back of cupboards and drawers to remind us of the many rich experiences we have had. With our most treasured possessions safely boxed up in the shed, we shut the door on our furnished home and handed the keys to our friend and neighbour, who is now also our tenant. As our property is surrounded by his equine stud farm, which needed accommodation for a new manager, it was a win-win situation that allowed us to pursue our dream to live aboard the sailing boat we purchased in Auckland last year.

The nautical theme started quite some time ago; as a teenager, Dean learned to sail on Lake Chivero (then Lake McIlwaine) near Harare (then Salisbury) and when we met in 1991 one of our first dates involved a picnic on an island. The following year we worked together as crew on a sixty foot schooner in Greece for the summer and returned to Zimbabwe in 1993 to get married (and spend some of our honeymoon scrubbing the inside of a bee-infested yacht he part-owned while it bobbed in the heat on Lake Kariba!) Sailing was put aside in 1994 when we moved to Mauritius for a year (where Scuba diving became our all-consuming hobby) and then to Swaziland for six years (during which time both Marc and Danielle were born and our Land Rover took centre stage).

Once in New Zealand, Dean took to the skies and trained to be a glider pilot but by the time Marc was about 9 years old our focus returned to the water and we bought a dinghy in which both children learnt to sail on nearby Lake Karapiro (the training base for the famous NZ rowers). Dean too was upskilling, acquiring a range of sailing qualifications over several years that made the absence of a boat to use them on increasingly ridiculous. I'm not proud of the fact that it took a reprieve from oesophageal cancer in 2011 to remind me that life can be shorter than we imagine and that dreams can shrivel up 'on the back burner' if you leave them there too long.

Back in 1992, on the waters of the Med, we had met a couple from Port Elizabeth, South Africa who sold their house and GP practice to go cruising. We had aspired ever since to do the same thing one day but twenty years had slipped away and the next step was overdue. We joined the Waikato Yacht Squadron and bought an 8.2m trailer-sailer that took our little family to some beautiful spots along the east coast of New Zealand's North Island. In 2017 Dean and I made a twelve day passage over to Tonga as crew on someone else's 45' yacht, which was a valuable experience. After nearly a decade of experiences on board Jury's Rig we were ready to pass her on to new owners and graduate to our first keeler, our current 42' floating home, SV Masterplan. She is well capable of ocean passages, having made many in her 38 years, and we know that when we are ready, she will carry us to the new horizons that await us. In the meantime we are learning new ways of being and looking forward to further exploring the shores of this beautiful country we are blessed to call home. With New Zealand's borders open again after the Covid-19 pandemic we are daring to dream of reconnecting with the family back in South Africa. A reunion will feel very different without my dad (Duncan McBean) who slipped away peacefully at home in Jeffrey's Bay on 9th January this year (2022) with my mom (Margie) and my wonderful sister, Carol, at his side. He will be missed mightily!



Nola, Marc, Danielle and Dean, Hamilton, NZ, November 2013



Carol and Angus Teeton, Nola Herrmann, Duncan and Margie McBean, Caitlin Teeton. Photo taken by Billy Teeton at Woodridge Prep School on one of the precious trips back to South Africa to reconnect with family and friends (June 2016).



At the helm of our trailer-sailer, Jury's Rig in the Hauraki Gulf, NZ (circa 2018)