



Bill Broadhead

Born in England in 1928, Bill was one of the first English migrants to come out to Australia after the second World War. He travelled around the country doing various jobs for several years, including managing the South Pacific distribution of Time magazine. He also sold printing and packaging materials for a number of companies. Later on, he and his wife set up and ran an art gallery for nine years in Olinda, Vic. After retiring from conventional employment they went to live in England, Andorra, and Spain for thirteen years before returning to Australia. They recently moved from the NSW central coast to Mount Tambourine, Qld.

I was born in the army town of Aldershot, in Hampshire, in 1928. My father had finished a stint on the northwest frontier in India, and was back in England. He met and married a young Irish girl, Anastasia O'Brien. My sister came along first, then me. The Depression was just beginning and we lived rather poorly - but not as badly as some. Later on father got a better job and we all moved up to Nottingham in the Midlands.

A couple of years later, when I was nine, my mother died, and two years after that World War II broke out. My father, who was a reservist, was called back into the army and my sister and I were left to the mercies of, first, relatives, and then a string of housekeepers, none of whom were really interested in our welfare. We very nearly starved, and even now I find it hard to throw a crust away. The last of these so-called housekeepers was a pretty dreadful woman with a hump on her back and she rapidly filled our house with army girls (ATS) and war-workers - (or war-dodgers)! I can well remember being pulled out of bed late at night and staggering back through the snow and rain from the local grog shop laden with beer bottles and crisps for these awful people. Eventually they all left and my sister and I physically tossed out the housekeeper and peace reigned. My sister,

then 15, was given permission to draw the army allowance and we looked after ourselves from then on.

The bombing was getting rather bad, so we usually pushed the big dining room table into the corner, threw a heavy tablecloth over the top to make a tent and slept underneath - or read comics with our torch. We had a French tin hat for me to pee in. Often a passer-by or neighbour would throw a clump of earth at our window, knowing that we were in there alone, to frighten us. Especially during a raid. Nice people!

Later on I joined the Air Training Corps and along with my mates went out to the Air Force base at Syerston to help screw on the bomb fins and wind them up into the bomb bays of the Lancasters. After this came the Air Force, where I did three years on air-sea rescue launches. Alas the war was over by then so we had no-one much to rescue. My sister joined the WAAFS, so she was in the air force too.

When I left the RAF I decided against returning to Nottingham. My father had married again and had a couple of kids so I really was "not wanted on the voyage". I thought I'd try my luck in London (just like Dick Whittington!). With a bit of help from Uncle George who was a member of the Royal Institute and an exhibitor at the Royal Academy, I got a job in Fleet Street sorting out printing blocks for a while till I started selling advertising space for a whole host of hopeless little publications like *Speedway Gazette*, *Holiday Camp Review*, *Ballet and Opera*, etc and eventually finished up on *Vogue* magazine. I began to see how the other half lived.

London was great fun after the war, but I was a young man just turned 22 and I needed far bigger challenges. So, with an old air force mate, we signed a few forms at Australia House in The Strand and six weeks later we were standing shoulder to shoulder with lots of other young people on the decks of *SS Otranto*, waving goodbye to the rain, cold, and seagulls.

When we arrived in Western Australia we quickly said hello to the rain, cold, and seagulls - (as it was winter) - and headed out to the wheat belt around Merredin. Many jobs followed: lumping bags of grain on the Fremantle docks, selling advertising, shovelling wheat on the silos in Katanning - we even tried the goldfields in Kalgoorlie but one trip down a two-man mine was enough for us and we were very glad to earn our fares to Adelaide on the old steam train by throwing logs into the boilers at the power station. The temperature must have been in the 50s at the fire doors. When we reached Adelaide we worked in a glove factory for a couple of weeks stamping out thumbs for industrial gloves, then we caught the rattler to Melbourne.

In Melbourne my friend and I split up. He was really an optician and never quite approved of our lifestyle. He soon married a little school teacher and later ran off with her seventeen year old daughter. Nice going! I was accepted into the National Gallery Art School. Between daubs I worked as a night watchman at Mt Buffalo, a labourer on Eildon Weir, started flying lessons when money allowed, and had a roaring time in the boarding houses of St Kilda.

Eventually I got married and my wife Noelle and I bought an old house on a couple of beautiful acres in Olinda, right on top of the Dandenong Ranges. We virtually rebuilt the place and opened an art gallery there which now has an international reputation.

At the age of 44 I discovered that I had an eighteen year old daughter from my bad old days. (Recently she was married for the second time. She now lives on 600 glorious acres west of Pt Macquarie.)

When we hit 50 we decided we'd had enough of the good life - the good, safe, tepid life - so we sold the house and gallery and headed for England via Paris - the most breathtaking city on earth. We found an old Georgian stables in Buckinghamshire about 40 miles north of London that had already been converted - badly - into a house. The first thing we did (after buying a dog) was climb up through the trapdoor, hang on tight, and kick the ceiling in, exposing a beautiful array of hand-carved oak beams. By the time we'd finished the house was worth three times more than we'd paid for it.

I worked for the Bowater Paper Co while we were in England. They sent me on marketing courses to Churchill College in Cambridge and offered me the job of general manager of the Cambridge plant. This I declined, as previous GMs had lasted about three months, so bad were the union troubles at that time. The workers were deliberately sabotaging the company - sending out wrong orders, or sending orders to the wrong place, sending the company to the wall so they would be put off and collect redundancy money. Then they'd buy a new car, or do up the house, or more likely, take a holiday in the West Indies or Florida - spend the lot - then go on the dole!

The dreariness of England's weather finally got to us and the three of us (don't forget the dog!) moved to Andorra in the High Pyrenees. We stayed there and in Spain for eight years. Because you could live so cheaply in Spain, we bought a second home right on the Mediterranean about 40kms south of Barcelona. I did a lot of painting during these most happy years and we met lots of very interesting folk from all over the world including the fabulous Stoddarts, a family of artists from Sydney who own a winery just north of Barcelona.

We decided at 60 that it was time to go home - wherever that was - so we sold the place in Spain. It's value had doubled in two years and we smuggled the money (14 million pesetas) over the border in our old Esky! And now here we are back in good old Oz - which I'm afraid we're still finding rather tepid. We've been back nearly five years now but have made few friends - though the people are pleasant enough. I guess we've changed too much to find it easy to settle back here.

As an overall description of my working life I'd have to say that it was in sales - but it was just for the money. I had more fun away from work than I ever had from it - especially when we were running our gallery in Olinda. But the sales jobs were all just for the money to live on - I didn't get a scrap of satisfaction out of any of them. Not a scrap.

Because of being in the Air Force and this and that, and although I went to art school, I didn't have time to completely learn everything that I needed to become a painter straightaway, though that's what I wanted to be - painting is in the family. But I never had "The Divine Spark" to do anything much. I paint when I feel like it, and if I don't I won't. I can't work if I don't want to, you know? In other words, I really haven't got the Work Ethic. I have to want to do it. With most jobs, if you're there working it's a sort of imposed discipline, you have to do it because you're there, but if you're out on the road in a company car and you don't feel like working, you *won't* knock on the doors - you go home. (*Laughs*).

In most of my jobs I was always out on the road. But I couldn't say that I *enjoyed* any of it. Maybe this is because I probably wasn't very good at it. I don't think I was very good at selling, really. My heart wasn't in it. I think I always saw the goods I was selling as somehow beneath me - selling bloody cardboard boxes, for instance: what's the big deal in that? If I worked in a beautiful art gallery in Paris I'd be very enthusiastic about trying to flog a painting to a rich customer - there's the difference! But selling packaging machinery or some rubbish...! Even though the stuff might fulfil a function, so does sweeping the roads - somebody's got to do it but I didn't like doing it - although it was quite well-paid.

I didn't mind the big-spending, free lunches aspect of it. Sometimes you'd meet a customer who was interesting and you'd take him out to lunch. I'd enjoy talking to the odd publisher and taking him to Jimmy Watson's where we'd get pissed for the whole afternoon, but that was the social aspect which had nothing to do with the work. Some people say you have to do that to get the work but that's not so. Selling is done first, then comes drinks, and lunch...and drinks!

I didn't form any long-term friendships at work. It's not that I wasn't interested in my colleagues - they just weren't interested in me. I don't know anything about football, for instance - I'm not a scrap interested - cricket either, or any sort of sport unless I'm doing something myself like swimming or rowing. I was never one of the boys in the pub. I'd rather have a drink with my wife than go into the pub - any day. It just wasn't my bag. When I was much younger I might go up to the pub with a few mates on a Saturday morning and have a few and that was fun, but once you're married I think your life changes and you don't have so many men friends any more. You have mutual friends, and dinner parties - we usually go out with other couples. It's different to the single life - the "Talk About Football" life.

I think what I enjoyed most of all was doing a batch of sixty paintings while we were living in Andorra. It was the happiest work time in my life. I used to start work at nine in the morning - I'd have two or three paintings on the go, half-done at various drying stages - bash out another one - and I was happy as a pig. I'd stop about twelve o'clock and have a drink with Noelle, do another half hour or so, then finish for the day - lie in the sun or go and visit people. It was great. The satisfaction came not only from the fact that I was painting, which I enjoyed, but quite frankly, it was satisfying as well because, without pushing things, I was selling my work. It gave me a lot of self-esteem - feelings of self-worth, because people wanted my work. Any artist will tell you this. If nobody wants your work you're finished, you know. I think self-esteem is rather important in people's lives - I've never had very much myself. Anyone who loses a parent at a young age has a strange sort of early life and the insecurity never leaves you.

I enjoyed my early years in Australia very much. It was an open country. There was lots of work. You never had to worry about getting a job. You could do a job just for a little while and get enough money to keep you going till the next town. You could move around - do all sorts of marvellous things - which we did. Australia was such an interesting place in those days. We'd sleep in empty houses - we had a whole lot of fun. I've noticed great changes in Australia since I came here in 1950. It was very British then, and I think we've gone down the wrong path following America as much as we have.

Noelle and I went to Olinda and stayed there for nine years, and the building of

the house - (we put a second storey on and I did a lot of the work with my own hands) - were fun years. Running the art gallery was very satisfying.

You ask me if I ever felt exploited when I was working in conventional jobs. Well as far as being a salesman goes I think I did the exploiting! It's not something to be proud of, but I have to say that I don't think I gave good value for money. I did OK because I had my buyers well-trained. Some of the sales reps used to work like mad but I think that was because they had nothing better to do. I used to work like fury from nine till twelve some days - (that would be a good day for the company) - and then go home. I'd have my collar and tie and cufflinks off while I was still in the car heading up the mountain, ready to start hammering and getting stuck into the house, which is something I like doing. I could ring my office and have them send so many thousand boxes to so-and-so and my buyers would ring me at home with any problems. I preferred to be busy rather than have time on my hands. I like building things and making things. I can't stand inactivity - it drives me mad.

You asked me what I was happiest doing as a job. I don't think I'd have a happiest or an unhappiest one. "Happy" doesn't seem to be the right word. To me, all work other than painting was just a bowl of lukewarm porridge. Nothing. It should never have been in my life, it was just a waste of time really - apart from the fact that they were paying me. People who work down the mines probably say the same thing: they hate working down the mines, but they get paid for it, so they keep doing it and that's it. I suppose there are a great many bank managers who aren't happy either - nine to five, doing the same sort of thing day after day. It calls for no creativity. Unless a job is creative... - well, you can't make something out of a sow's ear, can you? If you're selling cardboard boxes... Other people don't seem to ask much of their jobs, and my attitude always made me feel something of the odd man out.

I don't believe in misplaced loyalty to a company. I see it as a contract - they give you money and you do something for them. And although I used to skive off home and all that, they wouldn't have kept me for ten years at the first job and for eight years at the next if I hadn't been doing *something* right.

If you lost your job through a merger or a takeover or something, then that could be nerve-wracking till you got another job because there would be no money coming in, but leaving my last job to go to live overseas was no problem because we had enough money behind us by then to keep us going for quite a while. Being free of money worries is a great spur to creativity.

The only time I was ever in a union was when you had to join one to get a job - this was when I was travelling around all over the place after I came to Australia. But I'm not against unions or anything. And I wouldn't swap that part of my life for all the tea in China.

It's been a very interesting life and it's not over yet. I've written an account of my life - it finishes in Australia, but there's another twenty years I could add to it now. But it's hard to judge your own work. I don't know how it would read if I came to it as a stranger. You'd probably think something like "Who are you? Why do you want to tell me about you?". It's different for, say, David Niven or Bob Hawke - someone interesting or well-known. But we all know people who don't seem to doubt their work. I think confidence comes from the early years of one's life. You're given your confidence by your mother I think - especially a boy. She gives him confidence by telling him he's good. If she keeps on telling him he's good,

then in the end he is, because he believes it. You've got to be told you're good when you're young.

Before he joined the army when the war came, my father had a job as a civil servant. It was a reasonable job, but nothing to write home about. I'd say we were middle class. Through living in the south of England, which is very different to... unless you were English you wouldn't understand this but the south of England and the north are completely different, much more different than, say, Melbourne and Sydney. My wife thinks that bringing ourselves up during the war was an important factor for both my sister and myself. She says how we turned out normal she'll never know! After the war my father married again, and my half brother went on to become a Doctor of Physics, because times were better then. My sister and I just happened to hit the worst time possible. I've always enjoyed my family. I've got six uncles and one's a top flight artist, and we have six doctors in the family, but my father, being the eldest, was not as well-placed as his brothers, let's say.

Before I left school I did various jobs for pocket money. I was a grocery boy on a Saturday morning, and I was a newspaper boy delivering newspapers to houses. My sister and I were living alone for quite a large part of the war - just the two of us. She was 15 and I was 13. When the bombs were falling we used to go under the bed or the table because we couldn't be bothered going next door to the neighbours' shelter. The shelters were only little things, and ours was full of water. I've written about this in the account of my life that I wrote. I'll read a bit to you:

“ Miss Holt, the little hunchback housekeeper was busy making money. She wasn't at all pleased when father, deciding that we should be living in our own home, fetched us up from Grandma's. On our return we found the house pretty well full up - three ATS girls, Goldie, Blackie and Vicky had been billeted with us and they all shared a double bed in the main bedroom. Doreen, my sister, had to make-do with a put-me-up in the same room. She used to whisper to me about the giggling and tickling that went on during the night. Even at thirteen I knew what she meant. Miss Holt had a nice big sunny room all to herself, and she was the housekeeper. We also had to put up with Arthur. Arthur was a war-worker or war-dodger, or both - a bit cross-eyed was Arthur, and very proud of his motor bike. He once accused me, with a cuff about the ears, of turning on the petrol cock. I denied this vehemently, (but had!)

Anderson air-raid shelters, small corrugated iron structures half-buried in the ground, were being erected all over England. Someone must have made a fortune. They had no doors and quickly filled with water and remained quite useless. The man next door was a carpenter. He must have thought the war was going to last a long time. He brought a bag of tools home from the depot where he worked and made a showplace out of his little shelter. First he fixed a good strong door with a porch over the top of it, and his wife painted it a nice shade of green to match the grass sods growing on top. The only thing missing was a hanging basket and perhaps a foot-scraper. Then he fashioned a bench on which his wife and two children could lay down. Doreen and I were invited to share this little haven on bad nights and we accepted gratefully. Miss Holt said she was a fatalist and preferred to stay in bed - or under it.

One night the bombing was particularly bad. Goering's boys were aiming for the army depot about two miles away and their aim was getting better. Doreen and I were, as usual, perched on each end of the bench with Mrs Jewel and the

children lying in the middle. The roar overhead was becoming deafening, then they let our bomb go - the one with "14 Kingrove Ave" chalked on it. It sounded for all the world like a whistling kettle. Mr Jewel, who stuttered rather badly, said "M-m-m-my God, Th-th-this is the end!" and, gathering up his wife and kids he shot underneath the bench, into the cigarette ends, apple cores and fish and chip papers, leaving Doreen and me dangling our legs over the side. When the dust settled we noticed that Miss Holt had made a miraculous appearance. The tangled heap of arms and legs slowly emerged from under the bench, and Mr Jewel smiled sheepishly. Doreen looked at me and curled her lip. The bomb fell on the golf links about a half a mile away.

Another night when the bombs were hurtling down, one of the Jewel children was, understandably, a little restless, and played up a bit. Mrs Jewel grabbed his arm and shook him until his eyes rolled. As he let out a yell she said angrily, "Wait till I get you upstairs - I'll kill you!"

Because my sister was two years older than me she rather sheltered me from the bad bits. (She's married to a doctor in Switzerland now and they live very well indeed.) She always says that we were deprived, but I never saw it that way. I saw it as a huge adventure. It may have done something to my self-esteem, but the whole thing was an adventure, really. But on her it left scars - or, at least, a lot of resentment. Being two years older she became a sort of little mother to me. When I visited her in Switzerland after I'd been 22 years in Australia and survived many adventures, she reached for my hand when I was about to step off the kerb in her safe little village. I guess sisters are sisters!

When I was living in Melbourne and learning to fly I met a bloke with acute astigmatism who was already a pilot. He was a youngish chap - not a wartime pilot - and he had his licence but wasn't rated to teach. I'd done a bit of flying in Tiger Moths, but I hadn't gone solo. He offered to teach me more about flying, so we went out to Moorabbin. They used to take away the joystick from the back cockpit if the pilot didn't have the right rating, so I took along a piece of broomstick with me about a foot long, put a handkerchief over the end and screwed it into the joystick socket - tight. Then we took off. Once we got aloft this chap would put his hands on the side of the cockpit to prove that I had control of the plane - that I was actually flying it and that he had faith in me. One day the broomstick came out of its socket and I couldn't get it back in. The plane was going from side to side as I tried to put it back, but the "instructor" just thought I was fooling around. Then the nose started to dip down, and when I still couldn't get the stick back in place I had to lean forward and bang him on the head with it - it's all I could think of to do to let him know what had happened.

About this time I also worked on the construction of Eildon Weir. I started off as a labourer - on the "banjo" (the shovel) - and rose to the dizzy heights of clerk in the stores office at the end. Here's an extract from my book about the sort of work I was doing in that period:

Each fortnight we worked twelve days straight and had two off. My job was on the jack-hammers; drilling holes 20, 30 or 40 feet down through solid rock. By the end of the day I was grey with stone dust - hair, eyebrows, clothes, everything - all grey. Long steel rods about one inch thick were dropped into these holes and gradually a spider's web of steel rose high into the air. This was reinforcing for the concrete that was later poured within the wooden formes. We were building a

spillway beside the dam and as work progressed and the overall plan took shape, the construction workers became very interested in what they were doing. Men of all nations came up on their days off, or on Sundays, to look at their creation and to argue with the surveyors and engineers about the best way of tackling the job.

There was a great urgency in the air, and as winter approached the water slowly rose behind the huge earth wall. The Americans who were running the show demanded their pound of flesh, but they always listened to the Union demands, which were constant, and the living conditions improved all the time. First we got mattresses, then "wet weather" money, then "wet weather" clothing, then we were paid while we ate, etc.

...I hung onto my jack-hammer for ten months. If all the holes I drilled were joined together I would have been able to kneel down and take a look at London.

The money was enormous. Every fortnight I went along to the Post Office in the village and paid it into my bank book. I was too mean to spend a penny! "I'm not in this dump to spend money," I said to my mate Sean, "I'm here to save, save, save!"

There was only one strike while I was at Eildon, but it was a beauty! The men were trying to have a shift boss fired, but the Americans had dug their heels in and refused to "give him the arse", as it was called. I don't know what he had done but he was certainly most unpopular. Two bully boys ran the unions and were usually in control of the situation, but this time the Yanks wouldn't budge. "Right! We're pulling everyone out," said Frank the Communist. "Oi agree!" said his mate Pat the Irishman. So we all downed jack-hammers and picks and crowbars and shovels and went back to camp.

Not everyone agreed with the strike and the workers soon split into factions, For or Against, (or rather, Principles or Pay). Sean and I were of course on both sides... Fist fights started up all over the place, and on one occasion I even saw a couple of hotheads thrust and parry with pick handles for foils! Everybody joined in - and nobody was safe for long...

...The last people to go on strike were always the cooks. "The men have got to eat," they said, piously, drawing their pay as usual. But even they were called out this time and the problem of where to scrounge a meal began.

*Sean and I were luckier than some. I knew the Personnel Manager quite well. We had worked together on a camp show and Mamie, his wife, undertook to feed us now and then. She had a lovely contralto voice and trotted out "Summertime" from **Porgy and Bess** at the drop of a hat. Her nature was as sunny as her voice.*

There was always the camp store to fall back on, though the man who had the concession was a bit of a vulture, and cleaned up at Eildon before moving on to another project.

The Italians in the next hut didn't do too badly. They trapped a few rabbits on the hillside and boiled them up in an old kerosene tin over a smoky fire. Then they sat around with big steaming plates of stew as one of their countrymen played "L'Spagnola" on his accordion.

One day the men decided the strike had gone on long enough. They marched up

the road singing and shouting and formed a circle around the Administration block. "Sack him! Sack him!" they chanted. Some were armed with sticks and a couple of young Germans stood on the sidelines carrying their rifles. By this time the police had been called and were arriving in special buses from Melbourne.

Finally the Americans gave in and sacked the man. On the morning of his departure he came out with his bags - and found that some kindly soul had put a plimsoll line around his shiny new car with a 6" nail.

Frank the Communist didn't last long after this, either. He was rebuilding his car and had it in pieces. Coming back from a weekend in Melbourne he found the half-assembled vehicle in a big heap outside the camp on the main road. His gear was piled up in the back seat.

The men went back to work. The wall, and the water behind it, rose higher and higher.

I had a couple of good mates while I was at Eildon Weir - one was an artist, Ray Jackson, and the other one was a half-mad English bloke called Gordon who was a surveyor's assistant. We had plenty of money and we'd hire a taxi for the whole day or night and he'd just take us around from pub to pub and we'd get really pissed - including the taxi driver (in those days it didn't matter). One time we'd come down as far as Narbethong, drinking our way down through Buxton and places like that, and then on to Healesville. The publican there said we'd had too much already and he wouldn't serve us any more. I called him a chi chi, which is a pretty racist think to say. It's a derogatory term for Eurasians - I must have heard my father use it I suppose. So we were thrown out of the pub and started walking up the main street of this little town to go to the Grand, which was another pub at the other end. The manager of the first pub must have been on the phone, because halfway along there was a line of local blokes across the road, including two local coppers, waiting for us. Gordon yells "Charge!" and we hurl ourselves into the middle of this bunch and it's on! They finally wrestled us to the ground and got us into the local gaol - a little hut made of railway sleepers - and we had to go up before the beak the next day. They wanted to send us down to Pentridge, but luckily the taxi driver turned up and paid the fine, (ten pounds from memory), so we were able to get away with that one.

By this time I was starting to get sick of the life I was leading, the booze and everything, so I got a job with the Forestry till I pulled myself together, then I went back to Melbourne.

You ask me the difference between the work I did for money and my other "work" - painting. Work that you like doing isn't really work at all, is it? It's a pleasure. "Work" to me means something not very nice. You get money to live. I don't think a doctor considers his work to be "work", but perhaps that's why it's called a profession. Perhaps that's the difference. To my mind work is hewing coal and sweeping the streets - although I suppose it doesn't necessarily have to be physical - to me, being an accountant would be worse than working in the mines...(I wonder if I really mean that?)

As well as the actual "painting" side of art, there's also the Art Business - the commercial aspect of it. In many ways it's a racket. If someone like Rudy Komon "discovers" somebody he'll put everything into publicising that one artist, or maybe a stable of a few artists, to the exclusion of anyone else (not that I've ever

met the bloke). But fame breeds fame, with exposure, and once you're well-known your art becomes valuable not so much for its artistic content, (though of course that does come into it) but because of the promotion of it. I don't think people like Dickerson (whose work I admire), or Brack, if they'd opened their own little gallery would have made the fortune that they have. Or like Pro Hart - that sort of work needs promotion, too. People like Dobell, and Dargie - straight painters whose work is beautifully done - just don't have the publicity value these days of being different, trendy, or avant-garde.

With my painting, I enjoy doing things that come relatively easily. This is true of most things with me. I don't have the stay-with-it powers that I should have. I like working with my hands, which is why I enjoy painting - it's a hand thing as well as a brain thing. I love making things out of wood - or anything. I find it terribly satisfying to use my hands. I'll work day and night if it's something I want to do, but if it's something I *don't* want to do I *cannot* do it. That's probably why I wasn't much good as a salesman, although I made my living at it for twenty years. I was probably very lucky that I was selling things that people wanted, or needed. A sort of captive audience that didn't need that much selling anyway.

In a way I pity people who've got money. If you don't have to go to work you seem to do less than if you have to go to work. When you go to work the hours left over at the end of the day are far more precious and productive. If you don't have to get up in the morning to go to work you probably find you don't do as much. But if you get home at five and there's three or four hours of daylight left you'll work like mad to build things around the place.

I think to be born with a lot of money, to be *very* wealthy, might be different. I've never really heard of anyone being famous for some skill if they've been born very wealthy. I think most art comes from middle class people. It doesn't come from the very poor. People who starve in garrets very rarely produce good work. You need enough food in your belly. You need enough money to buy the wine. You need people around you, and stimulating talk, and ideas flashing backwards and forwards. But if you're *very* poor you're at the coal face all day, and you sleep when you're not. That doesn't produce good art. And at the other end of the scale, I don't think great wealth does either. They'd be more interested in sipping a drink at an art opening than dirtying their hands with paint up to their elbows.

I think people in general have more of a chance these days than they did a couple of generations ago, but I don't think they know how to use the opportunities. Television has spoilt people's creativity a lot, it's spoilt their conversational abilities - though they should be more articulate because they're exposed to a lot more these days - but they don't seem to be, probably because they're watching the wrong things. You can't be articulate if all you watch is American TV, can you? There was a theory way back that everyone should be paid the same, and the job itself should be reward enough. Under this scheme the doctor would be paid the same as a labourer, and his reward would come from doing something that he really wants to do whereas the poor old labourer doesn't. But I'm not so sure this holds up, because most doctors are only in it for the money anyway.

And now we're waiting on a phone call from the Estate Agents to confirm that our house here has been sold. Then it's off to the Queensland rainforest and another adventure. Who knows? We may even open another art gallery. What *is* all this

uselessness? What's it all about, Alfie? I know one thing - it's not dissatisfaction, this urge to move on and see new things. Perhaps it stems from a deep feeling of gratitude for this gift of life. And as they say - "You use it or you lose it!"

(Recorded May 30 and June 6, 1995.)