

ALBERT ACHTERBERG: BANK WORKER



Mum, Dad, two sisters, and two brothers arrived in Australia in September 1960 on the Zuiderkruis from Amsterdam. Mum was Catharina nee van den Bogaard and dad was Evert Jan Achterberg. My brothers were Evert and Dirk, my sister was Catharina, and there was me, Albert, and we were born in Amsterdam. We were from Holland and came under the Netherland Australia Migration Agreement. My dad had been working in the construction industry as a fitter and concreter, but his last occupation had been a lead burner in a chemicals section. The immigration authorities said he would be classified as semi-skilled and he accepted that. After spending our initial time in the Bonegilla migrant camp and then in the Maribyrnong Hostel, we came to St. Albans in 1961 and settled in Fox Street.

There I first attended St Albans Primary School in Year 6.

In 1962 I attended the first grade at St. Albans High School. In those days we nearly all walked to school and some of the lucky ones had a bike. Parts of Main Road West and Main Road East were unmade roads with open gutters.

By the time I went to the high school I was able to converse well in English, however it was still a case of "pick the Aussie" as the school was mainly made up of migrant students. I think there were over thirty nationalities represented at the school when I started.

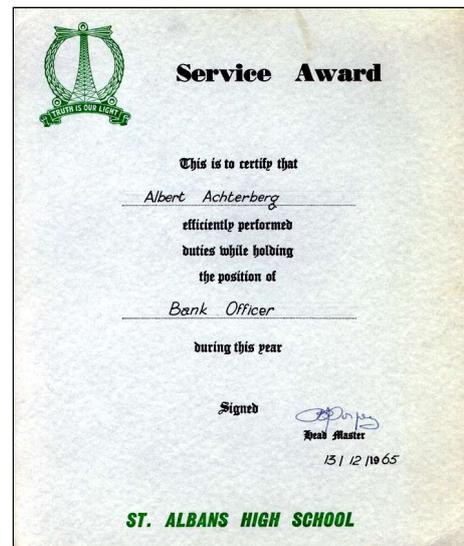
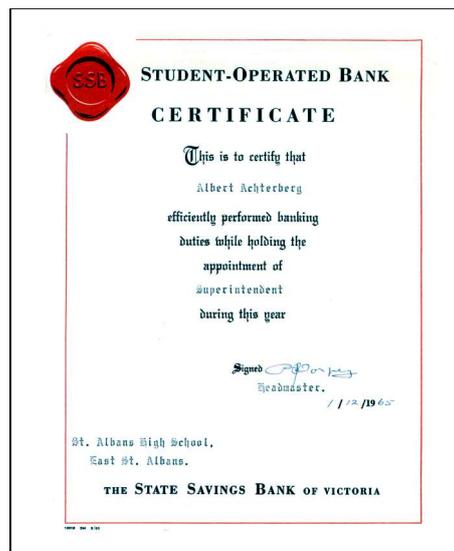


Albert Achterberg (back row, five from right) with Mrs Krikscunis, Form 1L, 1962.

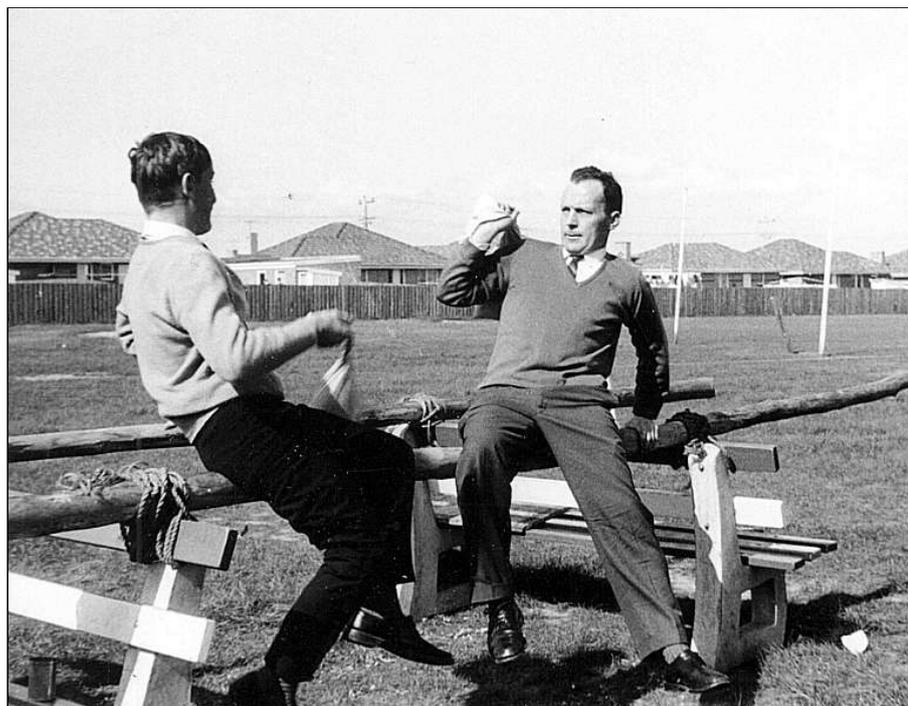
Highlights of my school years included:

- Photography Club, conducted at lunch time by Mr Ziemelis. He certainly was a great influence on my life as I continued doing part-time professional photography for the next 30 odd years; for example, during the 1970s I was a casual press photographer for the Sunbury Observer newspaper and took photos at the Sunbury Pop Festival in 1975.

- School Banking on a Tuesday – this was where students were able to do their banking with the State Bank of Victoria – students set up the student banking. Ironic that I ended up working for the State Bank (subsequently the Commonwealth Bank) for a period of 36.5 years.



The school held a large fete in 1965 to raise funds for the new hall. All classes were given a challenge to come up with the biggest fundraising for the day. Mr McLeish ran a log fight on the day and sure attracted a lot of the fellows who wanted to give him a hiding.



Taking on all challengers, Norm McLeish in fundraising mode, 1964.

Our class had a sweet stall and we managed to get a lot of the sweets donated. Our class won the competition and we ended up on a school trip to Mt Martha.



Fund raising fete for school hall, 1964.



Mr MacLeish & Form 3E. 1964. Albert in middle of back row.



I left the high school in 1965 and commenced in the Bank one week after decimal conversion on the 21st February 1966. In 2003 the Bank offered me a nice redundancy package and since then I have been enjoying a semi retirement.

Currently I am married to Rebecca Roseanne since 1972 and we established our home in Sunbury. We have two children: Roseanne 33 and Andrew 31. Andrew is married to Amanda and gave us our first granddaughter in 2004.

I have been involved with Rotary International for a number of years. Currently I am the secretary for district 9790, and have also been involved with bookkeeping for the group. I have also been president of the club in 1994/95.

Albert Achterberg, 2005

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