

Tribute to Les and Yvonne Spicer

by Donald and Denise Bugden

Les and Yvonne both had a positive and long-lasting influence on both our lives, for which we thank God. They not only spoke into our growing faith but displayed it in their everyday lives.

Les joined his Uncle and Aunt, Stan and Thelma Bugden's household when he came to Gisborne for his apprenticeship and lived with them until his marriage to Yvonne. So he was like an older brother to Donald. He was unfailingly kind and displayed to his younger cousins how to work consistently hard to achieve his qualifications, how to live a good, honest life and to be respectful and kind to everyone. His growing faith was a great influence on them as well.

I, (Denise), came to Gisborne to finish my schooling when my parents returned to Africa as missionaries. Les was the Salvation Army Youth Group leader, planning all sorts of activities to keep us occupied and connected. At 17, I had a lot of questions about the reality of God, and Les was patient in guiding me through that time toward a deeper faith and understanding. Many of us from those days still keep in touch and occasionally have reunions. To Les' credit, most of us continued on in our faith and have become leaders in various roles in our churches. I met Donald there and we have enjoyed 56 years of happy married life together so far.

Yvonne always welcomed us teenagers into their home for suppers after church and youth group. Her baking was legendary and greatly appreciated. She supported Les in his youth group work and thrilled us all with her beautiful singing in church. She was always welcoming when we visited them on the times we passed through Tauranga and called into their Papamoa home. We knew we'd always be greeted with love and acceptance, catching up with them both. What an example they've both been to us!!

It is comforting to know that they are in the presence of God now, and that we will see them again one day.