



Maurie Jarvis MBE
1917 - 2003

Maurie was born in Somerville on 18 January 1917, one of four children of builder Bert George and Ethel May. Maurie went to both Dandenong State and High Schools, leaving school at 14. At 16, he went to work at the Dandy Bacon Company as a driver. He worked his way up, studying part-time, to become the National Sales and Marketing Manager. After almost 50 years, he retired in 1983. In 1940 Maurie enlisted in the Army. After fighting for four years in WWII, he returned home in 1944 and married his childhood sweetheart, Gwen. They have four daughters.

In 1931, at just 14 years of age, Maurie attended his first public meeting in the Dandenong Town Hall, called to establish a sewerage system. He went on to become a board member for the Dandenong Sewerage Authority for 35 years, including being appointed Chairman.

In 1955, Maurie became a Dandenong City Councillor in order to save the Police Paddocks, "I wanted to preserve land while it was still available," said Maurie. Foundation Chairman of the Police Paddocks Committee, he served it for 37 years. A Councillor from 1955-1992, he was Mayor between 1959/60, 1964/65 and 1975/76. Of his substantial achievements during public office, it is the establishment of Wallara, a centre for the intellectually disabled, that is so dear to his heart. During his Mayoral year in 1959, Maurie built support for the project; at a meeting in his home, "... people came from everywhere" and Wallara started in his lounge room. Volunteers, "shaking jam tins" in the streets of Dandenong, raised the initial money. Maurie has been a board member for 37 years and Chairman twelve times. Today, Wallara is leading the way for the intellectually disadvantaged.

In 1977, Maurie was awarded an MBE, followed by an award for Dandenong Citizen of the Year in 1982, and Freeman of the City of Dandenong in 1992.

At 83, Maurie has been - and still is - an inspiration to Greater Dandenong people. The community benefit in so many ways from his vision, hard work and dedication: coaching tennis; teaching Sunday school for past 59 years at the Uniting Church; acting as a member of the Dandenong High School Advisory Committee for the past 33 years; serving with the Combined

Charities Committee or with the Dandenong Agricultural & Pastoral Society; opening his family home to disadvantaged and lonely people as a refuge.

Through the Scott Street Day Care Centre for the frail and aged, where he has been on the Board of Management for 11 years, Maurie still visits the sick and disabled daily. Maurie's selfless dedication to Dandenong, is best explained by his own words: "the trouble is, I love this place!"