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26 July You did notice the new address, I trust (and if you keep records of such things, the new telephone number is (03) 467 4862). Kingsbury is part of the City of Preston and a mere 13 kilometres, or about 8 miles, less than 3 leagues, from the throbbing heart of Melbourne. La Trobe University is just across the road. Students of Australian history will know that the university, established in 1967, is named after the first governor of the colony of Victoria; they may not know, may not even care to know, that Kingsbury is named after Private Bruce Kingsbury, VC, killed in action New Guinea 1942.

Between 28 May and 8 June we looked at an awful lot of houses. Chris Sarantakos. our landlord's agent, said the landlord was keen to keep us as tenants and we might care to look at a very nice two-bedroom flat he owns; that might suit me, I said, but where would Sally live? We need a big house, I said, six or seven rooms and a garage (the place at West Brunswick had eight rooms and garage), and it must be near a tram stop. You won't find it in Brunswick, mate, Chris said, not under \$160 a week. We'd been paying \$105 since 1984, and I knew that was less than market price, but I had no idea how much less it was; modestly renovated, that house could be let for \$200 a week now.

I concentrated on the inner northern suburbs: Kensington, Flemington, Moonee Ponds, Essendon; Carlton, Brunswick, Coburg; Clifton Hill, Northcote, Fairfield, Thornbury. Everything I looked at was too small, or too expensive, or too grotty, or too far from a tramline - some all of those things. Big house near tram stop, I kept saying to agents, and they kept sending me to tiny houses with six little rooms, two kilometres from a railway station. On 3 June an agent said he had just the place for us, at Kingsbury. Where's Kingsbury? I said. Near La Trobe, he said. Too far out! I said. But there's a tram stop almost at the door, he said. Big deal, I thought. On Saturday 6 June we looked at a wonderful old house, beautifully renovated, opposite Coburg Lake. The bloke who took us through said he'd put us on the list and let us know on Tuesday (Monday was a holiday). We wanted that place, but kept looking. On Monday we looked at a house in Preston, which was awful, and I said to Sally we might just as well go on, since we were on Plenty Road, and see what Kingsbury looked like. We used to have Sunday School picnics out here, I said; of course it was all bush in those days. We drove into Clunes

Street, I couldn't remember whether the number was 2 or 6, not that it mattered, we weren't moving this far out, and saw a bloke painting no.6, so we stopped and asked if the place was to let. It was, and here we are. We signed the lease on the Tuesday, and the same day were offered the house at Coburg and four other places.

We arranged to move on the 19th, then changed our minds and made it the 18th. 18 June was a cold, sunny day, and the move took forever; we were up at 6, the van arrived at 8.30, and it left Kingsbury, after two trips, at 5.30. 19 June was a cold, wet, miserable day; the rain barely let up all day. We tried to feel grateful, lucky, that we had changed the moving day, but mostly we felt frustrated and miserable, because that was the day the Peugeot packed up. After all the nice things I said about that car in PG 70! So there we sat, looking at the rain and making hard observations about Peugeots, landlords, Telecom and life in general. We had loads of stuff still at West Brunswick, and the place had to be cleaned up; the car seemed to have busted its gearbox - it just wouldn't go in reverse; and we had no telephone.

Sally was about to go looking for a public phone in the rain when a Telecom van turned up, and in an hour or so we sorted things out as best we could. My sister Joy lent us her car for the week it took to fix the Peugeot. Ken had never even heard of a band breaking in a 504 automatic, but two had gone — first and reverse. We collected the car on Friday, and the following Tuesday, in Moreland Road, Coburg, it lost third gear. Ken couldn't believe it. It was fixed and ready by 10 the next morning; no charge, not even for the tow-truck.

In the middle of all this, on 25 June, I was elected an honorary life member of the Society of Editors, along with Beatrice Davis, Frank Eyre, Basil Walby, Wendy Sutherland, Teresa Pitt and Stephen Murray-Smith. That, believe me, is distinguished company, and I feel suitably humble. Also scared, because I have this superstitious feeling that whenever I receive an award or honour things go terribly wrong for me. This feeling started in 1984, when the Fellowship of Australian Writers gave me their Barbara Ramsden Award; at the same time I was selling off my books to pay bills. The first thing to go wrong this time is a job I am doing for Stephen Murray-Smith; I was banking on it to pay for the move. "No need to rush that job," Stephen said on 25 June, "We won't have any money until January."

Life goes on. Dylan has spent a lot of time at the Pascoe Vale Veterinary Hospital and seems to have survived yet another fatal cat disease. Sally spends two hours a day on trams, reading. I'm getting a bit of work, but I spend a lot of time watching cockatoos: they like our back yard, and come visiting, twenty at a time. Fascinating.