



In the early days, we only had services in the Barry Memorial Church on Christmas Day and Easter Sunday. We used the old piano for these services. Before we could have a service, Mom Lyall Beyers would have to organise a cleaning gang to sweep and dust, but more importantly shoo out the unwanted members of the congregation such as baboon spiders! One specific Christmas, we had missed one. Claude [Reverend Claude Mitchell] was on the pulpit and was the only one who was aware of what was happening. As I started playing the carol, "*Hark the Herald Angels sing*", I noticed a huge spider on the top of the piano starting to make its way down the side and on to the keys! There was no way I was going to stop nor was it going to walk over my fingers. So I put it into second gear and played faster and faster. The congregation really battled to keep up, but as I hit the last note, I took my hands off the keyboard and the spider crossed the middle C! I thought Claude was going to have a seizure as he tried to suppress his laughter.

It must have been circa 1979 (or thereabouts) when the traporreltjie was to make its appearance. It was after we went to Gauteng and before Dad Jannie passed away. The Stuttafords had the house on the river side opposite the Cillies. Sheila Stuttaford phoned Mom to say that there was a harmonium up for auction. It had belonged to a Karoo farmer who had had it restored and could then not pay for the restoration. Mom said fine she would contribute R600 and the Stuttafords provided the rest. It was installed at the back of the church in all its magnificent beauty.

That year when we arrived for our holiday, Mom informed me that I would be playing the orreltjie at the Christmas service. I said that there was no way as I did not have the vaguest idea of how one plays it. As you know Mom, her response was that there was always a first time! And she definitely did not take no for an answer. So that meant that I had to start practising. It was in fact a question of building up stamina so that I would not run out of steam half way through a carol.

It was actually quite funny. Because I am so short, I could not have my feet on the floor while "trapping" the pedals for the sound! I had to "trap" without touching the floor. Also Maans had to stand with me, as he had to tell me when I reached the start of the last verse, as I had to concentrate so hard that I could not count the verses too! Hester Barry always said that it looked as if I was riding a horse!

Then some time in the early eighties, a gentleman (I believe he came from Mossel Bay) who was camping, came to see me as he wanted to go for a blow in the church with the orreltjie. He had a sawn off trumpet especially for church music. We then had a session the following day and it was suggested that we do it for the service too. Mom was not too sure and felt we should get the Bishop's blessing first. She could however not get hold of him and she said we should play and she would check with him when he arrived. Well he arrived and asked where the beautiful music was coming from and was quite enthralled and agreed to it.

We had practised the carols for the service, but the only voluntary was "*Amazing grace*". Well it was really a magnificent combination. I remember Henri saying that he could not sing because he had a lump in his throat. When the service was over, I noticed that everyone was waiting for the music before leaving. I said Amazing grace. He said again? I said we don't have anything else! Well once everyone had left the church, Maans said we must up the volume. By now I was exhausted, my legs like jelly and of course one has to use one's knees to get volume. Well no-one was leaving. That trumpet music with the orreltjie resounding from the church was really magnificent. I was thrilled to have played a small part.



Dad passed away in November 1980. Kathy and Alan got married on the 27th of December. I believe this was the first wedding at which the orreltjie was played and the organist was Petro, who by the way also provided music at the reception together with Boesman Keyser.

Then came the carol services. They were all very special when the traporreltjie was used. It just gave a special meaning to it all. I remember playing one year when there was a commotion in the church. I glanced at the congregation (remember I had to concentrate and couldn't just look away for fear of losing rhythm!) to see that one of the "*candle holders*" had caught fire. It was always pretty dark by the time we neared the end of the service until Trevenen put up the special "*candelabras*" which provided more light.

The traporreltjie was also played at the service when Tom Barry's ashes were out to rest.

When Mom Lyall passed away, I thought that it would be a fitting tribute to her if someone would play the hymns on the traporreltjie during her memorial service. As she had been instrumental in putting it in the church, it would be right and proper for it to send her on her way. Unfortunately I could not find anyone who was prepared to play. So I did the next best thing and did it myself. I considered it an honour to play amongst others "*Guide me Oh Thy Great Jehovah*" as a tribute to the wonderful work she did for the church.

It is pretty sad that it is no longer played and apparently has not been played since the introduction of the electronic keyboard. It has such a very particular sound and it always resonated across the open spaces around the church.