

# the China syndrome

Cyan Magenta Yellow Black

watched their nude mother modelling for him and Stephen Walker.

"It all looked very serious, then I glanced at Lehene and we burst out giggling. With our hands over our mouths we dashed out of the room. We threw ourselves onto his [Uncle Gordon's] big bed, rolled onto our backs and laughed ourselves silly."

She will also be taking another look at her old town and the way its society, population and attitudes have changed.

"There are now 2000 people in Hobart who are Chinese-Australians [note her preference for that term and the inclusiveness it declares, rather than the Australian-Chinese description of her childhood].

"There are double that number statewide. I can remember going to Salamanca on a Saturday on an earlier trip and being amazed by the Hmong people," she said.

I told her that today, living in Sandy Bay, I can count more than a dozen Asian restaurants within an easy walk of my front door. She was both surprised and delighted.

We swapped similar observations as Tasmanians do. But to Helene Chung goes the ultimate piece of Tasmaniana.

It was 1961 and she was 16, living at Longley with her mother. They were heading home down Sandy Bay Rd when Miss Henry's open-top red MG collided with a truck carrying tonnes of apples. Her mother was unhurt, Helene was only dazed, but the car was a write-off.

Decades later, Helene was in a queue at Devonport waiting to drive onto a Bass Strait ferry. She noticed a red MG a little way ahead and took time to go and take a closer look.

"Not bad," she told the owner. "No, it's not in bad nick," he said. "Did it up myself. A wreck when I bought it. I've had it 30 years, bought it off a Chinese lady at Longley."

The first entry in the acknowledgments section of *Ching Chong China Girl* provides the perfect ending to this wonderful account of a life: "To my parents, Dorothy and Charles, not for my birth but for their divorce which catapulted me into the challenging childhood that, for better or worse, made me what I am."

● The book will be launched by Max Angus at 5.30pm on Thursday. Helene's mother, Dorothy, will be among those attending.

**"And now I am able to laugh at so many things which were once so stressful"**



**MEMORIES:** Helene Chung can now smile as she looks back on her trying early days.



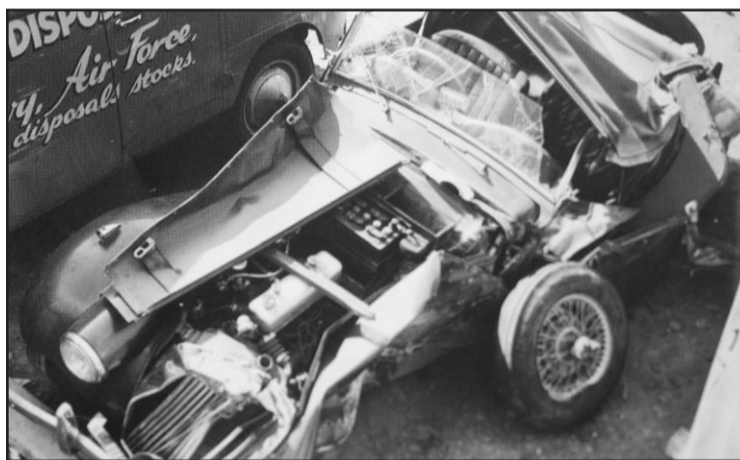
**DRESS-UP:** Lehene as a bride, Mary Imlach as bridesmaid and Helene as the priest.



**THEATRE ROLE:** Producer Helene, third from right, with award-winning Old Nick cast and crew in 1966.



**TRAIL-BLAZER:** Helene, the ABC's first overseas female journalist, interviews Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Ilvichev in 1983 in Beijing.



**TOTALLED:** The wreck of Dorothy Chung's MG after it collided with an apple truck on Sandy Bay Rd in 1961.



**AMAZING RESTORATION:** Helene discovers her mother's old car decades later while waiting for the ferry at Devonport.

## Rockers enter hall of fame

By **JAMES WIGNEY**

DRAGON and Russell Morris are the first two artists to be inducted into this year's ARIA Hall of Fame.

The pop rockers and *The Real Thing* singer will be honoured at a ceremony at Melbourne Town Hall on July 1, which will be open to the public for the first time.

Dragon started as an "acid, jamming band" in New Zealand in 1972 but moved to Australia in 1975, dominating the charts in the late '70s and '80s with hits such as *April Sun In Cuba*, *Are You Old Enough*, *This Time, Rain and Dreams of Ordinary Men*.

The unashamed pur-



**THRILL:** Morris had hits in the '60s and '70s.

veyors of pop were based around the Hunter brothers Todd, on bass, and singer and charismatic frontman Marc, who died of throat cancer 10 years ago.

The band was always a dark and unpredictable unit, having no fewer than 35 members since its inception.

"The darkness came from being New Zealand-



**HONOUR:** New Zealand pop-rockers Dragon.

ders, the dynamic of the brothers, the lifestyle issues — which I didn't partake of and is why I'm talking to you today — and the personalities involved," said Todd Hunter.

While he was thrilled at the honour, he said it was a bittersweet one

given the history of death and tragedy within the band. He said his brother would have been thrilled by the induction.

"He was interested in our place in everything and I wish he was here," he said.

Morris, who had a string of hits in the late 1960s and '70s, including the Johnny Young-penned, Molly Meldrum-produced *The Real Thing* and *Wings of an Eagle*, as well as the classic 1971 album *Bloodstone*, was equally thrilled to be admitted.

"It's a lovely honour and it's nice to be inducted but you do think, 'Gee, I'm getting older. It's only old buggers they induct into the Hall of Fame'."

## Youth charged over fire

LAUNCESTON police have charged a second 16-year-old youth over a \$500,000 fire at the Chinese Methodist Church in Mowbray earlier this month.

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