

nd Mrs

"He came out one morning and said: believe I have lost my bathers, I went vimming yesterday'.

"I said: 'Yes, your Excellency, they're there on the balcony railing'.

"He told me not to worry: 'I will go for the walk and get them myself', he said.

"His bathers were less than 20 steps away."

When the governors visited, the Fortuna mansion underwent a transformation, including new curtains and linen and the silver and glassware with L (for George Lansell) engraved in gold brought out of the vaults.

In a different world which seems alien now, Mrs Lansell ordered everything for the house from emporiums in Melbourne, despite the rapidly ex-

panding central business district in Bendigo.

"Mrs Lansell didn't like shopping here, people would stare at her all the time when she pulled up in a chauffeur-driven car and she was always dressed so well," Mrs Speechley said.

Mrs Speechley said she had only ever been back once to her former workplace, after the Army took over in the early 40s.

By then the elegant furnishings and majestic gardens were gone.

"It's a shame really," Mrs Speechley said, "it was a shame when they sold all the furniture and everything.

"Mrs Lansell was a lovely lady, I told her once I was going to live with my sister and leave Fortuna.

"She said: 'Myrtle, you will never get on, living with your relatives will never work'.

"She said: 'Go up and try it and then come back to me if you want to'.

"I went and ended up ringing and telling her I would be back in a week," Mrs Speechley said.

A week later Mrs Speechley was back caring for the family at Albert Park.

— MATTHEW O'SULLIVAN