

**LAURA 'BE THOU MY VISION', Jo-anne Berthelsen, Ark House Press, PO Box 163, North Sydney, 2009.**

JO-ANNE Berthelsen is an Australian author who has written an enlightening book about Laura Harding and her family. I believe it is a novel but it reads like the true story of an Australian family being stretched as they come to grips with the totally unexpected events that overtake them. It made me greatly appreciate Helen Keller whose life had the same spirit of testing and achievements.

At three years of age Laura loses her eyes to a rare form of cancer and the read-

er has the privilege of watching as each member of her family is impacted by that experience. Jo-Anne Berthelesen shows the variety of emotional reactions that followed each one, as well as the stresses and strain on parents.

The description of Laura's adjustment and determination to live a normal life, and to study at a normal school, speaks volumes of her mother's determination to prepare her for school, and for Laura's personal determination to be as independent as possible. It was an uphill battle all the way.

A gift for teaching children developed – especially those who were struggling to

read. Their achievements provided a sense of great fulfilment for Laura. Being named dux of her school was a crowning point. Different contacts began to point her towards Christian things, but it took time for this to come to the point where she knew that she had to make room for God in her own life. The story paints Laura against the realistic backdrop of Australian life. Finally she made her choice: 'I'm going to believe in You, God, and listen to You and do what You say!'

This book gives great insight into how life with a disability can be handled, and overcome.

– *Barbara Wilson*