

Martha Johanna Fuchshuber

nee Van Lunteren

"My family, consisting of my parents Elbertus and Martha and their six children Lammert (16), Ria (13), Martha (12), Rien (9), Corrie (2) and Bertie (6 months), migrated to Australia in 1956. I am the third eldest child and the middle daughter. We lived in an old single-brick house in Hilversum, a town about 30km South East of Amsterdam. ... My father's sister lived in Inala and my mother's brother in Darra offered to sponsor us. He had found a job for my father and therefore we chose to go Queensland."

The family arrived in Brisbane in July 1956. While they didn't live at Wacol "My brother Rien (aged nine) and I were not allowed to go to Darra State School and had to attend school at the Wacol Migrant Centre to improve our English and to learn the Imperial money and measuring system used in Australia at that time. At the school in the migrant 'camp' we were taught in English, which was not easy at first and we learned songs including the National anthem 'God save the Queen'. The anthem was also sung in picture theatres at the beginning of a movie and at other public functions. Everything was much more formal. Ladies used to go to town wearing their Sunday

best including gloves, hats and stockings, even in midsummer. The make-up of the elderly women was particularly noticeable, maybe to hide the ravages brought on by the sun.

There were many Dutch people in the camp and we made friends with quite a few of them. Going to school we quickly discovered a walking track ran alongside the railway line leading to the back of the camp. Taking this track was almost as quick as to walk back to Darra station and waiting for the train to Wacol which was only one stop away. One day I was sick and Rien had to go by himself. He came back unexpectedly, absolutely terrified, telling us that, on the lonely track meandering through the bush, he had come across a 'crocodile'. He absolutely refused to use that track again. No doubt it would have been scary for a nine-year old child that was not used to 'crocodiles'."

From the archives



Children getting milk – 1957

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