

### **Life at 'Alwyn' – 1950s and 60s Faye Fort**

Society member and descendant of the early pioneers of the district, Faye Fort (nee Partington), has provided us with another wonderful story of life in Greensborough, this time in 1940's and 50's. Faye's story reminds us how agriculture once played an important role for the Greensborough district.

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I look back on our life in Greensborough living on 12 acres and in a rather large house, which was built in 1947 by my father Alan Partington. I remember my father digging the foundations, and later with the help of a builder, the house was built.

In later years, father added a large room, big enough for a full size billiard table. He had lots of snooker nights with his mates and I remember Jack Smith, the owner of the hotel, being one of them. A few years later, when my sister Eleanor and I both became dressmakers, the pool room became our work room, we had our sewing machines in there and the big table came in handy for cutting out patterns.

Being a large house with four fireplaces, there was always a lot of wood to be gathered, we had an outside toilet, a septic tank, much better than a lot of the "dunnies" back then, still not much fun in the winter time. There was always work to be done, milking the cows, chooks to feed, and calves to be fed, also we grew a lot of vegetables which had to be watered; we used water from the river.

At one time there were about four hundred chickens in incubators, more work for my mother, what a wonderful lady, she never complained. Sunday morning she used to catch a chook, cut its head off, with us kids screwing up our noses when she had to clean its insides, she then cooked it for our Sunday dinner, this was as well as getting us kids ready for Sunday school, and of course the daily chores.

Father always grew potatoes, lots of caulies, cabbages and beans. He leased land to the Henderson Brothers from Heidelberg who grew vegies for seed; the Sinclair family who grew vegies, and Mr. Hain who grew polyanthus. In 1956, when the Queen came to Australia, father grew ten thousand Gladioli.

When Eleanor and I were older we both worked in the city dressmaking. We were often running late to catch the train in the morning and we used to run along the railway tracks to get to the station. To get from Hailes Street to the house, we had to go through a wooden gate, then cross the line, then through another gate, the train would only be a few feet away from us standing and waiting to get across, fancy doing that today!

Father, a policeman stationed at Heidelberg when he worked night shift, used to travel home in the train driver's cabin, the driver would slow the train down and let him off outside our house.

My brothers had to work hard ploughing the ground with horses. Also, they both had paper rounds, there wasn't much time for play, but it didn't hurt us. My younger brother

## Oral History

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Gary always had his old cars to do up. He had so many at one time that the council told him he had to get rid of some. I remember one time when my brother Trevor and I were sent to pick up the apples that had fallen from the trees, the bull which was tethered in the paddock had broken his chain. We thought he was after us but he only wanted the apples. We sure scrambled through that wire fence in a hurry.

After leaving Greensborough Primary School, three of us went to Eltham High School, my youngest brother Gary went to Heidelberg Technical School.

The council bought the house and land in the 1960s. It is now the home of the Riverside Cricket Club, a lot of money has been spent extending and remodeling the building. It hardly seems like the same place anymore, but it is very nice.

**Faye Fort (nee Partington)**  
2011

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Once again, many thanks to June Hall, leader of the Society's Oral History group in helping Faye bring her story to you. The Society's task of researching, preserving and sharing our history and heritage would be very difficult if it were not for enthusiastic volunteers like June and her team.