

### I REMEMBER

By Elaine Drakeford, nee Roberts

I remember when we moved to Greensborough, about 1939 – 40. My mum and dad moved our family to Greensborough because of the war, dad was in the army. We were the Roberts family, Hilda and Ron Roberts and as time passed by, they had nine children, and I am the eldest, Elaine – Frank – Richard – Ron – Allan – Margaret - David – Carol and John. David and Carol were born at the Greensborough Hospital, and the doctor could have been Ted Cordner.

We lived in Grimshaw Street, not far from the State School. Our neighbours on one side were Wiltshires, and on the other side the Cockbills, across the road, Eva Poulter and her family.

The Roberts crew all attended the Greensborough State School, the headmaster was Mr. Watson. As a large family we made our own fun. Our football was made of newspapers, for our cowboys and Indian games we made bow and arrows from bits and pieces of tree branches and bamboo, our cricket bats were made of scrap wood. We were happy to play as a family. My doll was a golliwog, that mum knitted for me.

When dad came home on army leave he had us all making a vegetable garden, it was a bout  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the block of land. Then mum decided to grow chrysanthemums and other flowers in season, and sell them outside the front gate on a Sunday, just to make a few pennies. She would cook fruit from our trees and preserve all she could get her hands on. No electric gadgets to help in those days.

We would go swimming in the Plenty river, we made a canoe out of a sheet of roofing iron and of course it had to have a sharp end and a blunt end. On our way to the river we would cut through an orchard and, being kids, had a loan of plums etc. On our way home we would pick mum a few wild Watsonias, she didn't like us going to the river, so we tried to square off with the flowers.

One day dad came home on leave, he had his army rifle with him, and he showed us how he could "shoot" the moon that was when we met Joe Dunlop, the local policeman. Dad and Mr. Dunlop became friends later.

As we grow older we "remember when", there were no mobile phones, fridges computers, TV's, Video tapes, Barbie dolls etc. In those day's we had time for each other.

## Oral History

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My dad had an "army set up" on the Cockbill's side of the property, it was to do with radio signals, and we were not allowed to talk about it.

After dad passed away, at the age of 59 years, we found out he was in "Z" Special Force during the 1939/45 war.

I went to work at the Egg Co-op, at the then Watsonia camp and my boss was Bernie Drakeford, at that time he boarded with Mr. and Mrs. Harris in Broad Street, and became friends with Maurie and Ruth Heavens and family. Other mates were Lindsay and Dora Neilson, from Montmorency. Bernie helped to show films at the Greensborough Picture Theatre. Bernie's mum and dad, Fred and Ethel Drakeford, had a guest house in North Eltham.

Bernie joined the Air Force in 1950. We were married in 1953, and have three grown up children, two sons and a daughter, and six grandchildren.

Writing these few pages made me think of more "Remember When":

The ice was delivered for the ice chest.

The baker delivered our bread with horse and cart.

The milkman filled the billy with milk.

And of course, the most important person, the "Dunny Man", who called once a week.

Mail was delivered on horseback by our postie.

It has been nice to look back on life and times.

Elaine. 12/11/2011