

MARYSVILLE MEMORIES

BY MARLENE FISKE

Born Marlene Halliday to Albert William (Mick) and Amelia Collins (Chick) Halliday on 16th May 1939. I was taken home to Cameron and Barton Sawmill on the junction of Keppel's and Cerberus Creeks in Keppel's Lane, Buxton. When I was 6 months old we shifted to the new site of Cameron and Barton Sawmill at the Cumberland Valley, which was later called Cambarville. This got its name from the first three letters of both owners surnames; Cameron, Barton and from the 'The Ville' (Marysville). My brothers Robert and Peter were born whilst we lived there.

My father managed Cambarville for many years. It became a reasonably big community with some 16 houses, a boarding house for meals for the single men, approximately 8 single men's huts, and a school. We were very isolated in the early days as not many people had cars. We were brought supplies from Barton's Store in Marysville (11 miles away) every Wednesday by Sam Ross and Colin ('Tiddles') Barton. The children used to love to hear the car coming, as they would bring us a lolly or two. If it had been snowing, which was often the case, these supplies could not get through. This meant that our parents always had to have a good stock of unperishable food in the larder as we had no refrigerators or freezers, only a Coolgardie Safe kept cool by wet hessian bags down all sides from a tray of water on top. In the early days, the only time we left the Mill was to go to my grandmothers at Ararat at Christmas and when it was voting time a bus would come up from Marysville and take everyone to town.

I started school at Cambarville and went to the 7th Grade. There were not many of us at times and one teacher taught all grades. We had an excellent education, not only in the schoolroom, but also exploring the bush around us, making cubby houses among the ferns and sassafras. With broken bits of crockery and anything else we thought was pretty, we would make fairy houses among the mossy roots of the trees and live in the land of fantasy.

The school was also used for social activities. There were two other mills in the area, Andersons Mill just above us and Yelland's Mill off the Woods Point Road. The people from these three mills would join one another at the school either on a Friday night for cards (Euchre) or Saturday night for dances.

When I was 13 years old I went to board with my Auntie and Uncle (Ron and Beat Anderson) in Marysville so that I could attend high school in Alexandra. My father would bring me down on Sunday night and pick me up on Friday afternoon.

In 1957 the Halliday's build a house in Barton Avenue, Marysville and shifted into it in June of that year. My father used to drive to Cambarville from Marysville with a truckload of workers until the Mill burnt down and then it was relocated at Narbethong.

I went to Alexandra High School finishing at the end of Form 5. In my years at high school I was Long House Captain, School Captain and Prefect. We left home at 7.30 to catch the Narbethong school bus every morning and would not get home until about 4.50 at night, fairly long days considering we had homework to do when we got home. On leaving school, I went to work for Bantick Bros who had the garage in the main street of Marysville and were also logging contractors.

Marysville was very social in our teenage years. The Crossways was always playing music (Bill Haley and Glen Miller) and having wonderful coffee and toasted raisin bread. The picture theatre showed the latest of movies Saturday and Wednesday nights. Saturday night dances and balls were run by the Football Club, C.W.A., Cricket Club, Tennis Club; always something to do and we were all one big happy group of friends.

I married Kingsley Fiske on 24th February 1962 at Christ Church, Marysville. We lived in Darwin Street and that was where our children Leanne and Adrian were born. In 1970 we shifted to Vermont, Kingsley taking up a position with M.M.B.W. from which he retired in 1995. When Leanne and Adrian went to secondary school I went to work for the Tuckett Bros in their tyre service in Burwood and then when it was sold I went into the Westpac Bank and stayed there until I retired in 1999. I am now a lady of leisure enjoying my grandchildren, Brodi (9), Ned (6), Michael (8) and Braydon (3). I play competition tennis on Monday nights and have just taken up golf in the last 12 months with a group of ladies from the Vermont Lions Club of which Kingsley and myself are both members.

I have wonderful memories of Cambarville and what freedom we had as children running around the bush without a care in the world, our parents knowing that we were safe from harm, and of the great times we had in Marysville as a teenager and later on with family and friends.

15th February 2003.