

Farewell: Antoinette

"FAIRWELL" My sisters & brother shouting from the back window of our family car as we drove onto the dusty dirt road, bumping now and again onto the large dirt holes...

FAIRWELL..

Mum & Dad in the front seat smiles on their faces, us kids in the back screaming with excitement knowing we were on our way to a new life, far from a life we knew growing up. It was a good country life for me, my sisters & brother. We had loads of Aunties who were the best cooks, cream puffs, pink Lamingtons, plenty of goodies galore! Always an Uncle who would let me stand on their shoes while teaching me to dance to the swing of the town band of saxophones, piano, ringing out, every musical instrument possible. It was fun & I caught on very quickly to the movement of the music. There was always a dance, weddings, bonfire nights, parties, something fun to look forward to. We had plenty of male cousins who were such a tease! Although I had a happy childhood I would often lay around dreaming, wondering if there was more than this country life. "There must be more exciting places to go see?" Those thoughts would often be with me. Apart from the happy times, there was a downside as well. The town we lived in was often very hot and dry, with red dust storms, large bindi bushes rolling around in the dust, which kept us indoors for days, Dad's handkerchiefs tied around our faces, we would be begging our parents to let us outside to play.

We all started singing as we hit the smooth road ahead. After many long hours, Dad still had his foot very well planted on the pedal, driving his white, Ford Fairlane. Mum happily bobbing my youngest sister on her lap, no seat belts in 1960. I could feel excitement building. I was fifteen, full of wonder "what was my life going to be like, was it what I was missing during my young years, going to live in a large city?"

Our journey was long and tedious, it seemed endless. We suddenly became very quiet, peering out of the car windows, mouths open wide. Soon we were passing tall buildings, people seemed in a rush, the streets were busy with cars. As Dad kept driving, the scenery changed as we were suddenly in another place. We could see water, closer and closer we drove until we could see golden sand, waves crashing on the shore, with squeals of joy & laughter Dad pulled up the car to let us hop out. We ran on the warm sand, jumping with joy & laughter...this is it, I was right. I knew there was more than eating the dust from dust storms, always pulling prickles from my feet & toes, those awful bindi bushes. Now, all I could feel was the warmth of the sand under my feet, splashing the beautiful cool water of the ocean onto my face & the breeze blowing through my hair. I felt deliriously happy.

"FAIRWELL" country life, I have found another!