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Fun times in Booral: Margarette Smith (nee Tull)



Margarette, or Great Aunty Margie to our Leading Lady Denise, has shared some snippets of her fun-loving and hard-working life.

Margie was one of twelve with eight brothers and three sisters. She was born in 1925 to parents Harold and Esther Tull. They grew up in Booral, spending a lot of time with their grandmother as their mother fell ill after giving birth to twin brothers (one of which was Denise's grandfather Max Tull) and the father was busy working.

Dad was the breadwinner. He had the butchery and bakery in Booral in the building on the right-hand-side of The Buckets Way just south of the Booral to Washpool Road turnoff. The old house on the corner was the homestead belonging to the butchery and bakery but they lived in a house which used to be in-between these two buildings. They also lived up in what is now known as Tulls Lane and is off the Booral to Washpool Road.

Margie's father was the butcher, baker, and candlestick maker. As a kid, he got the horses of a morning down to the house to take the food around the community by cart.

Margie gave this wonderful description of her father killing and slaughtering the bullocks at Booral, just down the road from the butcher – he would get the bull into the shed, lock it in, get up onto the slab, use pith (a crowbar like tool) to stab it in the back of the head, it would fall

straight down to the floor; he would rush down, cut the throat, pump the blood out of the beast using his foot and the blood would run out the drain into a drum. He would cut up the beast and put it into the carts. Jack Barnes would collect the meat and take to the shop at Booral. The Branch and Booral people bought their meat at the shop. They also delivered to Allworth and Limeburners Creek.

Her father also did sheep and pigs. Margie said that it was not very pleasant to hear the pigs squeal, but as kids, they were stickybeaks and looked at everything.

He did everything. When the baker got sick, Margie's Dad made the bread. When the truck broke down, he fixed it. Margie remembered a father that was very clever.

Growing up, Margie went to school at Booral. She recalled the school as being like "a fowl coop"! Margie continued, "I got the stick so many times for swearing! The teachers were Old Mr Brown Lee and Mr Hawkins – hated them! I was cheeky. I had a fight with a boy and made his nose bleed – I won!"

The life of a young woman after school was very different back then. Margie left school to work at a dairy, helping Arthur Isaac's wife as she was crippled. Margie remembered them as nice people. She went every Monday morning. There were no washing machines. She would boil the sheets up in the copper and then hang them out. The Isaacs gave Margie her lunch. Of an afternoon she brought the washing in and then did some ironing.

At another home, Mrs Rowney had a big family of eight boys and a girl. Each time a child was born Margie would go and look after the children during the week. She would provide breakfast, wash, and cook for them.

Margie also took on the job of cutting wood because girls did everything during war time.

Margie now resides in Bulahdelah with some of her family and is well known in the community.

*If you would like to share your story,
or that of a family member, please get in touch.*

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