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Christmas in the Bush



I remember Christmas was always a very exciting time and had a huge build up when I was a child growing up in Allworth. You would be counting down the months, weeks, and then the days and hours.

We used to love making our own Christmas decorations which were displayed around the lounge room. Part of the decorations were the numerous Christmas cards that we received each year. These were

hanging over a line of string strung from wall to wall. Most years we had a live Christmas tree which had the added bonus of filling the house with its lovely pine aroma.

One of our traditions was that Mum always made a huge Christmas pudding. It was an art form and a skill which I think is mostly lost today. Certainly on my behalf it is. The massive amount of pudding ingredients were mixed up in a huge bowl, placed into a square of Calico cloth, tied off, boiled for hours and hours and then hung up, drained & dried ready for Christmas day.

I was always up early on Christmas mornings to check on proceedings only to be told to go back to bed because Santa had not arrived yet, it was way too early!!! One year Santa delivered a Barbie doll. I was so appreciative of it. I had hoped and hoped that it would arrive on Christmas morning. I played endlessly with that Barbie doll for years and years even though it arrived brand new with a broken arm. Her broken arm did not faze me, I just sticky taped it up because I was just so happy to have received her at all.

After the present unwrapping we would pile into our little tinny boat and head up the Karuah River for a family picnic which Mum had spent all morning preparing. Swimming, fishing and eating (especially Christmas pudding) were the order of the day.

Boxing Day was always spent with the other village children showing each other our presents and playing – usually cricket on what was known as the “spare block” across the road which was someone’s privately owned vacant building block. I was always renowned for being the best bowler of them all. They used to call me Dennis Lilley, which of course we all thought was hilarious at the time, because my name is Denise.

Wind forward to my young daughter’s Christmases today and things are so different. I guess because toys, books and clothes are so cheap to buy these days, it makes it easy for adults to overload kids with them. It is nothing for her to receive loads of beautiful presents for Christmas and underneath the tree is always full. The prices and availability of such beautiful things makes it very tempting as a parent to give your little one the things you could never have even imagined to have received as a child.



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