

Harriet Merle DUGGAN (BRITTON)

former teacher at Maleny Primary School 1950 & 1951

I was born Harriet Merle Britten on the 17th May 1929. My grandparents were early settlers of the Sunshine Coast area. On my father's side, my forebears resided here from 1880. On my mother's side, my grandfather who helped build the railway line from Brisbane, left to take up a selection at Ninderry in 1891.

My parents engaged in a mixed farming enterprise and I learned my spellings, tables and facts of history and geography while milking cows (by hand). I attended Yandina Primary School from 1935 to 1942 when I passed the Scholarship exam and progressed to High School.

Nambour had the only High School between Caboolture and Gympie. Students with access to a railway service from Glasshouse to Pomona travelled by train. Other students, such as from Maleny and Peachester, boarded in town. The train service homeward bound north of Nambour relied on an irregular goods service. Students would stay at school doing homework until 4:45pm. Sometimes Pomona students would not be home until after 8pm.

In 1944 Nambour enrolled the first students in Senior class. In 1945 I was in the second Senior intake. In 1947 I began a 3 year course at Kelvin Grove Teachers' Training College. From there I was appointed to Maleny Primary School along with 3 other trainees (**Denis Long, Bob Kollmar** and **Alexander**) and one experienced teacher. All arrived to commence duty at the opening of 1950 school year. A remarkable beginning to the year that was wet before school year began and stayed wet or overcast, with few clear days, until the May holidays.

I spent a very happy two years at Maleny as part of the **Salloway** family before being transferred to a one-teacher school, Traveston, south of Gympie. From Traveston I went to Kingaroy (an overnight journey leaving Yandina 8:30pm Sunday to Gympie, then a goods train service that reached Kingaroy at 7:00am Monday). I was later transferred to Yandina where the Headmaster who had schooled me earlier, was still the Head Teacher.

I married in 1957 and had four children, one of whom is a school teacher (a music specialist on the Gold Coast). I have been widowed since 1987.