

# Short Story Challenge

We asked our residents at Springs Retirement Village to participate in a short story challenge, writing about their fondest childhood memory.

Below are the three best stories that were picked.

## **Family Holiday to England – Mrs Sheena Scott**

Many lovely memories growing up in Scotland, although my early childhood was during WW2. I think that is why this particular memory is so vivid.

Going on our family holiday in 1946, the first one in six years and off to England! It was so exciting, I felt as if I was going to a foreign country as it was my first time out of Scotland.

Off on the train with my mum, dad and younger brother from Glasgow to Morecombe Bay. Going over Firth of Forth Bridge and throwing pennies out the window for good luck.

We arrived at a lovely house with a beautiful garden (we didn't have a garden at that time). It must have rained at some point but all I remember is sun, sand, sea, sandcastles and swimming and my parents sitting in deck chairs.

My brother and I loved the garden, apple trees and gooseberry bushes and a field where we ran ourselves silly.

It must have been wonderful for our parents to see us so happy and care-free after the stresses of the past six years. We had many more family holidays but the memory of that first trip to England never fades.

## **Growing Up in Northern Rhodesia – Mrs Liz Owens**

After WW2 and the Great Depression my father relocated his young family from Springs to Northern Rhodesia where he had managed to get work on the Nchanga Copper Mine in the town of Chingola near the Congo border.

We were housed in a company house and transport was bicycle or shanks pony. The government school and shops were about five kilometres from our house.

I was the only girl in our street so I spent my time playing with the boys, climbing trees and running through the sprinkler on the hot summer days. Our playground was the dense bush that surrounded our house, we would go searching for baby chameleons to put on our mother's ferns so that we could watch their growth and changing colours.

When I was 10 my father bought a second hand car and saved enough petrol coupons so that we could go on holiday at Shaka's Rock in Natal. It took three days and two overnight stops to reach our destination.

When we saw the ocean for the first time, I remember being amazed at the huge expanse of water. My brother and I spent many happy hours playing on the beach, climbing over rocks, looking for shells and swimming in the warm Indian Ocean.

When I reflect on my childhood, I realise how blessed I was to grow up away from the trappings of the big towns and cities.

We developed lasting friendships and values that have stood us in good stead. I value nature, Christian beliefs and respect for elders, which I have tried to instil in my children.

### **Condensed Milk – Miss Cecilia Stevens**

In 1940 when our little family got off the then once a week train at Beestekraal Station, it was so peaceful. The only house around was the Station Master's, where we were to live, it was a corrugated iron building.

We barely had time to set up our beds before we had to look for the box that contained the candles because it quickly became pitch dark.

Having fed and put us kids to bed that first night, my mother still had to wash my baby brother's nappies. As it was so very peaceful, not a neighbour in sight, my mother decided to hang the nappies over the fence.

To her surprise she found the nappies in shreds the next morning, a few of the culprits were still hanging around and so that was our introduction to the beeste of Beestekraal who, by the way never gave us a drop of milk.

*Must be why.... I still love condensed milk!*

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