

## MY CHILDHOOD HOME



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WE lived a very relaxing, uncomplicated lifestyle with doors unlocked and friends and neighbours coming and going. I liked the openness and embracing nature of everyone. One neighbour was a World War I Digger and his vernacular was something a young boy recently arrived from South America found fascinating. Mother, though, was less impressed with this induction into the Australian version of the Queen's English. He insisted the only footy club was the magnificent Pies and he would ensure he reminded me of this daily. He thought the



centre of the universe was Victoria Park.

We lived next door to an oval and sometimes when setting off for school in the morning, I inexplicably took a wrong turn and found myself cavorting around outdoors in carefree abandon until around the time the school bell would have rung signalling the end of lessons.

Life was rich in simple pleasures — playing footy in the park, visiting my uncle's cake shop in Brunswick and seeing how many lamingtons I could eat without being sick, playing in the backyard mud, hearing about aspects of Australia's folk history and listening to *Blue Hills* on the radio.