



Our Multicultural Grenfell



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We would like to thank everyone who has been a part of creating this publication.

We especially would like to thank each of our interviewees individually, for contributing their stories from their past experiences in their home countries.

Zovi Armstrong - India
Bob Jackman - England
Julie Ferguson - Aboriginal
Miguela Walker - Philippines
Marina Chamul - El Salvador
Elizabeth Akhiwu - Botswana
Liz Ko - South Korea

Our International Studies class is made up of year 9 and 10 students attending The Henry Lawson High School from Grenfell and the surrounding area.

As a class completing this project, we have come together to connect, celebrate and understand the multiculturalism within our own community of Grenfell.

We have interviewed local people from different cultural backgrounds living in our town and from these, we have created a book sharing their stories.

Our thanks are also extended to the Year 9/10 Photography class for the great photos.

We hope you enjoy reading these stories.



ZOVI ARMSTRONG

Zovie Armstrong was born in India, and she had lived there with her mum, dad, 3 brothers and her sister. Zovi said that she had a close bond with her sister who she had chosen to share her bedroom with her. Zovi and her siblings had been home schooled till year 3, then were moved to a Catholic boarding school. Her parents had jobs as a nurse and a teacher and having these jobs they were always busy people which meant that Zovi being the second oldest had to help a lot around the house.

In attending the Catholic boarding school, the uniform was very strict and if Zovi didn't have the correct uniform on she would get sent home. The uniform included a skirt below the knee, ties had to be worn and in winter she had to wear a blazer. The expectation of Zovi at the Catholic school was that the correct uniform had to be worn all the times or she wasn't allowed in the classroom. The hardest part of school for Zovi was that if she didn't pass the end of year exam, she couldn't move on.

When Zovi was young the most popular leisure activity to do at school, and when Zovi and her siblings were at home, was to play soccer. Everyone would get involved because of how popular it was.

In India, Zovi would always greet people with respect by saying “Guibi”. When she was growing up in India it was a very populated space with lots of people around. The traditions Zovi and her family grew up with are all different types of traditions compared to other states. One of the traditions, which was Zovi's favourite, was Christmas because she got to see all of her family. She celebrated this event in a very Christian community. Being in a Christian community, Christmas was a very big service in the church and the church would host a big feast for everyone that would go on for around two days. Being able to see all of her family members, is why she had passed on this tradition to her own children. So now Zovi and her children always travel to India for Christmas.

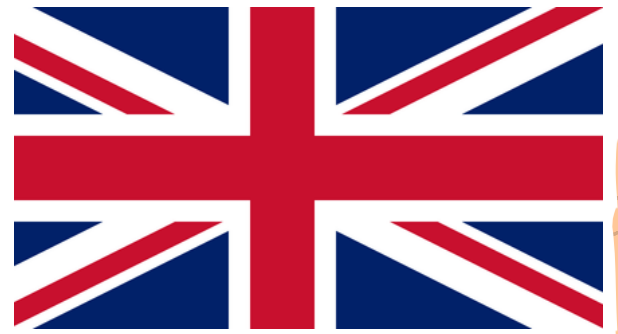
Zovi was 32 years old when she came to Australia with her aunty, Mum and a few other relatives. Moving to Australia was new to her as she didn't have any family members here when she arrived. When she came to Grenfell she lived in Wood street and then eventually moved. The reason she and her family had moved here was because she was getting married, which meant that she would move out to the farm with her husband after the marriage. Zovi had faced a couple of challenges when moving, one of these included the Australian accent.

She couldn't understand what was being said because of the Australian accent, so she had to listen really closely when talking to people.

Some of the things Zovi didn't miss about India were that it was a crowded and noisy place. But she will always like India because that's where she had grown up with her family. What Zovi liked about Grenfell is that it is a very close, small community.

Mikayla Hughes and Sophie Berry





MR BOB JACKMAN

Bob grew up in a small village, smaller than Grenfell, in Essex on the Thames River estuary. The village was tree lined and it was on marsh flats with miles and miles and miles of marshes. Bob never left the village to live anywhere else. He grew up without a father and it was his grandma who mostly looked after him.

He grew up during World War II and he would constantly have planes flying over.

During World War Two the German airplanes used to fly up the Thames River to London and pass right over the top of Bob's home, and the defensive airplanes of the RAAF used to try to shoot the Germans down before they reached London. As children Bob and his friends ran around trying to get souvenirs off crashed planes and the police used to try and stop them. There were always machine guns sounding off far away, but being young and crazy they used to go out and try again to collect souvenirs. One day the boys chased out and one of the boys saw a flying boat and they ran over to it and one of the boys picked up a boot and there was a foot inside of it. That was the end of chasing out to gather souvenirs.

Bob came to Australia when he was 14 years old after taking a long boat ride across the world. When he finally reached Australia the boat docked him in Victoria.

The reason Bob came to Australia with his mother, was because his mum was scared of

Bob's father thinking that he would get custody of him and take him from her. Bob remembers standing on the boat and leaving England in the evening. It was about 7:00 o'clock and there was a really cold wind with sleety rain blowing and he was standing on the stern of the boat looking back at England disappearing with the wind blowing in his face. He remembers it as a high adventure for one month aboard a liner visiting foreign ports all across the world.

Before Bob moved to Australia he didn't go to school until he was seven years old, at the outbreak of the war. Before that he was a secluded kid who used to wander around the Moors with his dog. So people often made fun of him because he was different and couldn't read. When Bob started school in Australia he went to a school in Williamstown in Victoria. When he first got there he was in his sensible clothing he would usually wear in England (Blazer) and when he got to school someone said they were going to "fix him up" because he was from England. They called him a "Pommy bastard".

Moving to Australia, Bob lost connection with everyone he loved and his grandmother was the one he missed the most. He only had his mother in Australia to look after him. Bob found it very hard in Australian schools because it was so different from what he was used to. During school he began to learn how to fight to stop the kids beating him up because he was English.

Back in England Bob only really celebrated Christmas, and it was good because his Grandma was a really good cook because she cooked for a rich family. So there was plenty of good food that she was able to make for her family. Bob said during Christmas his Grandma usually made a wonderful dinner for everyone. Day to day Bob usually ate a small tin of beans and spam (canned spiced ham) all year round. On special occasions his mum would cut up a chicken to serve.

Bob was brought up not believing in any religion at all.

He was really good at soccer but no one in Australia played soccer so Bob joined the local swim club. He ended up getting a job here and he was getting 30 shillings a week.

Bob got really good at swimming. He would have won against some of the best swimmers but he ended up looking around to see where he was because he wasn't sure if he was going the right way. He could have won but he ended up coming last instead of first. He started off finishing last and being behind by a long way but he ended up getting a German swimming coach. This coach pushed him into being the best he could until he was the best.

Thomas Murphy and Luke Murdoch





Aunty Julie

Julie Ferguson was born in June in 1962. Julie said that her Mum had a lot of friends and that as a child she used to go back to the country where her Aboriginal family lived for holidays.

Where her grandmother lived, Aboriginal people lived across the railway line and the white people lived on the other side of the railway line, which involved discrimination and racism. Around the age of 14, Julie found out she was Aboriginal and then her search began. She got involved in the welcome to country, smoking ceremonies and learning about Aboriginal history. Julie's family was loving and her brothers and sisters were always happy. She can still remember making necklaces back when she was a little girl with her grandmother.

It was so good when she would go to the river to listen to stories her mum would tell about how the birds got their colors. Julie's favorite memory was going to the river at the sand hills with her cousins and heading down to the river to swim. Her grandparents had a horse and cart, while her family had old cars that they used to get around in.

The decision maker in the family was Julie's grandmother, she was a very strong woman and Julie learnt a lot from her. The female elders were the ones that taught and showed her the way with the Aboriginal culture.

During school, proper school uniforms were needed to be worn. Julie also had problems making friends during school and if she did make a friend, her family would have to move away again.

Julie believed the government and the community is now accepting Aboriginal people and embracing the culture.



MIGUELA WALKER

Miguela Walker was born on September 29th 1967 and raised in a small village in the Philippines. Growing up Miguela had strict parents with 5 sisters and 2 brothers making her family slightly above average in size. Her neighbourhood growing up consisted of a lot of relatives making her childhood very enjoyable. Her social environment was enjoyable because of the ability to interact with close friends/family. Miguela's family were Roman Catholic and she still believes in God to this day. Her family fell into the working class in the Philippines and owned a coconut and coffee farm which she helped on. A major adjusting factor in her transition to Australia, was the cost of living which was three times more expensive than in the Philippines.

Miguela's school life had some high standards as you needed to pass every subject to go onto the next year and if you didn't you had to repeat. She played many games, and one was called Adam and Eve where two players were blindfolded and had to call out to each other to find each other, similar to Marco Polo. Her school provided food through a canteen service which served rice at every break time. Her school provided the same subjects as we do and some of her favourite childhood subjects were History, Maths and Biology and her least favourite subject was English. The Philippines offers both college and university which mean if you do a 4 year course you go to university, while if you do a masters you go to college.



Miguela faced many challenges when first coming to Australia, such as the home sickness, language barriers, readjusting to population sizes and the difference between American vocabulary and Australian vocabulary. She had struggled on some words coming here with language barriers and learning a different vocabulary of words such as arvo and afternoon. She had problems making friends and finding work with being embarrassed to speak because of her thick accent.



Even though Miguela had moved away from her home country of the Phillipines, she still holds onto traditions that were a big part of her culture. These can include the wearing of special dresses for special occasions.

Joshua Clarke and Jim Hazell





MARINA CHAMUL

Marina Chamul grew up in El Salvador. She lived with her parents and 3 siblings, and shared a bed with 2 of her sisters. Growing up with her siblings she said she did argue with them, but it wasn't all the time.

Marina's educational life was very different to how Australia schooling works with respect to terms and grades. She explained that in El Salvador primary school days only go until noon and that by lunchtime you're done for the day. The main game seen in the playground was baseball. Marina spoke about friends and how most families "grew up like one big happy family". She said that school meals were similar to Australia in that you were just expected to buy something from the canteen.

Marina spoke about how grades worked in El Salvador. In Australia once you finish a year you go onto the next year and that's the same with every single person, whereas in her home country you have to actually 'complete' your grade successfully otherwise they keep you back and it doesn't matter how old you are. Marina said "so if they do move you into the next grade and the teacher realises " oh okay well you shouldn't be here" then they turf you back". Marina then said that she wasn't old enough to have a job at the young age of 13.

Marina said she still celebrated holidays like Christmas, Easter, birthdays and they also celebrated the Day of the Dead. She said that it was a day where they would go to the cemetery and clean the grave stones It was considered "a big family affair". Marina said that there weren't any favourite meals and she only eats some of the cultural food when she goes to visit her mother, because Brooke and Brendan don't eat it. However, Brooke and Brendan do try some of the traditional foods, and have become accustomed to a couple of meals.

Marina's departure to Australia! She moved here due to a war going on back in her childhood, so as well as Marina, her sisters and parents many other people were moving from El Salvador at the same time. Marina joked about her mode of transport responding with "Qantas Jumbo Jet". She explained that her older sister followed a little while after, as she had her own home and family to leave with.

When Marina and her family had settled in, she resumed school as she did in El Salvador. She also took up an intensive English course as she was used to speaking American English, so Marina took the class to help transition to Australian English, which Marina found quite easy. Marina and her brother were used to speaking English, beside Spanish, so they were easily transitioned but for their younger sister it was a whole new language so she learnt from the basics. With friendships in school, Marina fortunately knew a few people that had also moved to Australia at the same time. She therefore had some people to relate to during this experience and she said that she's stayed in touch with her best friend Emma who still lives in Queensland.

Marina was asked whether or not she had experienced direct racism during her move to or time in Australia, and fortunately she hasn't. She said she first moved to Sydney which is known for its multiculturalism so she wasn't treated any differently. She stated that "where we lived there were Lebanese and Italian families there".

Marina spoke about cultural foods and newly introduced foods. Marina's favourite food was baked dinner and that she said she doesn't like Vegemite. Marina still incorporates her El Salvadorian cooking techniques and recipes and one of the recipes she still cooks is a tortilla made out of flour. This is the only thing she does cook because her family doesn't eat any of the other recipes. Marina said that every time she visits her mum they eat plenty of Spanish foods. Marina was very generous in sharing a traditional recipe from her culture that we would definitely like to try.

Prepared by
Amelia Donnelly (Far
Right) and **Sophie**
Hughes (Far Left)



Elizabeth Akhiwu



Elizabeth's background

Elizabeth Akhiwu was born in Botswana in Africa, which is a beautiful country. Botswana is famous for wildlife safaris, where you see giraffes, tigers, elephants hippos and rhinos in their natural habitat. It's also rich in natural resources like diamonds. Botswana is in Southern Africa and it has a beautiful, stable democratic society so you don't have any crises or civil war.

Elizabeth went to an English primary school, secondary school and University to study nursing. In her young school life Elizabeth used to play games like hide and seek and said many of the games they played were similar or had different names to the games her children play in Australia. There were also some native African games. Tswana is the native language spoken and she also spoke English when communicating at school. Being able to speak English helped Elizabeth with speaking with foreigners when she was at work.

Elizabeth was born into a very loving family. She had a deep relationship with extended family and told us that when having any event everybody is invited. Family members help out with kids. Elizabeth said she had some fine friends in Botswana. She did both a traditional wedding and a white wedding. The husband has to pay the bride's family a dowry usually cattle or money before he can marry her. The prettier the bride, the more he has to pay.

Family and Community Celebrations

Elizabeth celebrated Botswana Day and Independence Day in Botswana. They also have Christmas Day, New Year and Easter and other celebrations like birthdays or anniversaries where everybody joins in and the whole town is there.

Challenges faced growing up in Botswana

Elizabeth's parents were well to do financially, so she had everything she needed and she never had to walk to school. She felt privileged compared to other kids. The only challenge Elizabeth had as a child was avoiding being eaten by a lion.

Why Elizabeth moved to Australia

After getting married and having children her husband (Doctor Patrick) wanted to work in a rural practice and he was offered a job in Australia so the family moved to Grenfell.

Elizabeth's challenges in a new country and community

When she arrived in Grenfell they had four little children with the youngest being eight months old. In Africa she had a lot of support and family to guide her and help with the kids and in Australia she felt like she was a single mum because she was very busy and it was a big cultural shock to adjust to the food and the colder environment and new neighbours. It was very hard for Elizabeth to settle four children. She made friends and they were very helpful and neighbours would check she was ok. Some people even gave Elizabeth compliments that made her feel better when she missed her sister and mum.

The community were very welcoming and helped them quickly settle in. Some people even helped by volunteering to babysit. There are also some cultural differences she had to get used to, for example they teach their children to not stand when greeting an older person and to bend their head and handshake to show respect. In each town there was a king who solved any disputes.

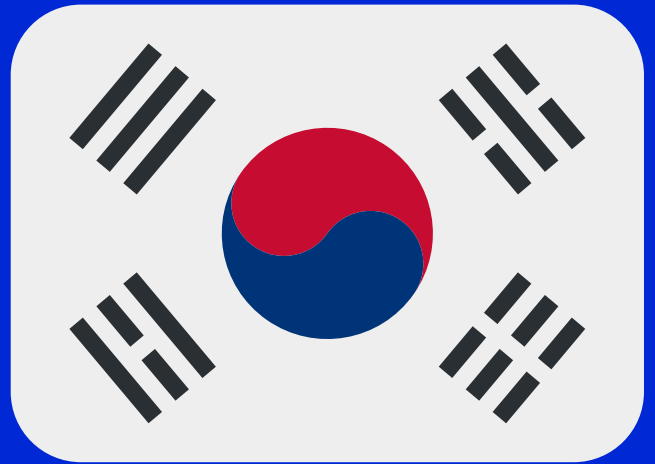
Meals In Botswana

Before being colonised by the British their breakfast was porridge or Pap (a maize polenta) then it became tea, bread and bacon and eggs. Lunch for Elizabeth was Pap with a minimal amount of chicken or beef. Another lunch was chicken in a salad.

Elizabeth's favourite traditional meal is prepared by putting beef in a slow cooker with onions and spices. When it is tender and starts to fall apart you shred it with a fork. They also have Pap (a type of porridge) with vegetables, including a lot of green vegetables.

Hamish Baker and Mackenzie York





Mrs KO

School life

Mrs Ko said that because Koreans are very competitive students focus on studies trying to be the best ,with school starting at eight a.m. and ends at 4 p.m, followed by tutoring after school for a further 4 hours. In Korea high school runs for 3 years, there are many subjects like sports, maths, music and art .

Living conditions

In Korea it's very comfortable, very easy, and very fast. You can go anywhere . If you want something you buy it from the Internet in the morning and you get it in afternoon. Most people live in apartments because there are not many houses. People work very hard, with long hours and have very few holidays.

Family roles

In a family in Korea, it is very patriarchal . The father has responsibility, as fathers go to work and they have the responsibility for earning income to look after kids. Before, men never did housework. Families are very close and children are expected to look after their parents when they get old.

Differences between Australia & Korea

Mrs Ko found that in Australia people respect each other's differences. In Korea respect everyone's differences but everyone constantly compares themselves to others,. If someone looks completely different from everyone else no one would say anything about it. Koreans are getting better but It's going to take time to change.

Challenges

In Korea if you miss the right stop on a bus, you would get off the bus and walk back, since the bus stops in Korea are very close together. But here in Australia if missed it, and get off at the next stop, it would be too far to walk. Public transport is very high quality in Korea compared to Australia. Mrs Ko has sometimes had trouble with people that have offered her a job, because they have tried to pay her much less than normal wages.

Language barriers

Mrs Ko said at start when learning English it was easy, but when you want to be good and get deeper in to English it gets harder. What did help is that Korea uses a lot of English words. For example time capsule. If you don't have a Korean word for something you would use an English word instead.

Discipline in Korea

In Korea people follow rules very easily and people are happy to follow the rules. The only time they might disobey the rules is when they're public image is at stake. Teachers, Doctors and Government workers are highly respected in Korean society so when they are told to do something, they listen and follow.

Max Harris and Chloe Kirkup

Mrs KO
And our team

